कथा-कलश

भाग 1

भारत का संविधान

उद्देशिका

हम, भारत के लोग, भारत को एक [1][संपूर्ण प्रभुत्व-संपन्न समाजवादी पंथनिरपेक्ष लोकतंत्रात्मक गणराज्य] बनाने के लिए, तथा उसके समस्त नागरिकों को :

सामाजिक, आर्थिक और राजनैतिक न्याय,
विचार, अभिव्यक्ति, विश्वास, धर्म
और उपासना की स्वतंत्रता,
प्रतिष्ठा और अवसर की समता

प्राप्त कराने के लिए,

तथा उन सब में

व्यक्ति की गरिमा और [2][राष्ट्र की एकता
और अखंडता] सुनिश्चित करने वाली बंधुता

बढ़ाने के लिए

दृढ़संकल्प होकर **अपनी इस संविधान सभा में** आज तारीख 26 नवंबर, 1949 ई0 **को एतद्द्वारा इस संविधान को अंगीकृत, अधिनियमित और आत्मार्पित करते हैं।**

1. संविधान (बयालीसवां संशोधन) अधिनियम, 1976 की धारा 2 द्वारा (3.1.1977 से) "प्रभुत्व-संपन्न लोकतंत्रात्मक गणराज्य" के स्थान पर प्रतिस्थापित।
2. संविधान (बयालीसवां संशोधन) अधिनियम, 1976 की धारा 2 द्वारा (3.1.1977 से) "राष्ट्र की एकता" के स्थान पर प्रतिस्थापित।

भाग 4 क

मूल कर्तव्य

51 क. **मूल कर्तव्य** – भारत के प्रत्येक नागरिक का यह कर्तव्य होगा कि वह –

(क) संविधान का पालन करे और उसके आदर्शों, संस्थाओं, राष्ट्र ध्वज और राष्ट्र गान का आदर करे;

(ख) स्वतंत्रता के लिए हमारे राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन को प्रेरित करने वाले उच्च आदर्शों को हृदय मे संजोए रखे और उनका पालन करे;

(ग) भारत की प्रभुता, एकता और अखंडता की रक्षा करे और उसे अक्षुण्ण रखे;

(घ) देश की रक्षा करे और आह्वान किए जाने पर राष्ट्र की सेवा करे;

(ङ) भारत के सभी लोगों में समरसता और समान भ्रातृत्व की भावना का निर्माण करे जो धर्म, भाषा और प्रदेश या वर्ग पर आधारित सभी भेदभाव से परे हो, ऐसी प्रथाओं का त्याग करे जो स्त्रियों के सम्मान के विरुद्ध हैं;

(च) हमारी सामासिक संस्कृति की गौरवशाली परंपरा का महत्व समझे और उसका परिरक्षण करे;

(छ) प्राकृतिक पर्यावरण की जिसके अंतर्गत वन, झील, नदी, और वन्य जीव हैं, रक्षा करे और उसका संवर्धन करे तथा प्राणि मात्र के प्रति दयाभाव रखे;

(ज) वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण, मानववाद और ज्ञानार्जन तथा सुधार की भावना का विकास करे;

(झ) सार्वजनिक संपत्ति को सुरक्षित रखे और हिंसा से दूर रहे;

(ञ) व्यक्तिगत और सामूहिक गतिविधियों के सभी क्षेत्रों में उत्कर्ष की ओर बढ़ने का सतत प्रयास करे जिससे राष्ट्र निरंतर बढ़ते हुए प्रयत्न और उपलब्धि की नई ऊंचाइयों को छू ले।

कथा-कलश
भाग 1

केंद्रीय माध्यमिक शिक्षा बोर्ड के अन्तर्गत 'बी' पाठ्यक्रम के रूप में हिन्दी पढ़ने वाले विद्यार्थियों के लिए नवीं कक्षा की सहायक पाठ्यपुस्तक

संपादक
रामजन्म शर्मा
चन्द्रा सदायत

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING.

प्रथम संस्करण
अप्रैल 1999 चैत्र 1921

चौथा पुनर्मुद्रण
अप्रैल 2003 चैत्र 1925

PD 50T DRH

एन.सी.ई.आर.टी. के प्रकाशन विभाग के कार्यालय

एन.सी.ई.आर.टी. कैंपस	108, 100 फीट रोड, होस्डेकेरे	नवजीवन ट्रस्ट भवन	सी.डब्लू.सी. कैंपस
श्री अरविंद मार्ग	हेली एक्सटेंशन बनाशंकरी III इस्टेज	डाकघर नवजीवन	निकट : धनकल बस स्टॉप,
नई दिल्ली 110016	बैंगलूर 560085	अहमदाबाद 380014	पनिहटी, कोलकाता 700114

रु. 10.00

प्रकाशन विभाग में सचिव, राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्, श्री अरविन्द मार्ग, नई दिल्ली 110 016 द्वारा प्रकाशित तथा शगुन आफसेट, 132, मौहम्मदपुर नई दिल्ली-110 066 द्वारा मुद्रित।

आमुख

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद् के तत्त्वावधान में विद्यालयी स्तर पर विभिन्न शैक्षिक विषयों के लिए पाठ्यपुस्तकों आदि के निर्माण का कार्य लगभग ढ़ाई दशकों से भी अधिक समय से हो रहा है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति लागू होने के साथ ही ऐसी शिक्षण-सामग्री की आवश्यकता का अनुभव किया जाने लगा जो नई शिक्षा नीति के उद्देश्यों की प्राप्ति में सहायक हो। छात्रों के सर्वांगीण विकास पर नई शिक्षा नीति में विशेष बल दिया गया है। नई शिक्षा नीति में भारत के राष्ट्रीय जीवन के लिए आवश्यक कुछ महत्त्वपूर्ण मूल्यों को केंद्रिक शिक्षाक्रम के रूप में स्थान दिया गया है। साथ ही राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के अंतर्गत त्रिभाषा-सूत्र पर विशेष बल दिया गया है। इसके अनुसार अखिल भारतीय संदर्भ में हिन्दी का पठन-पाठन प्रथम भाषा, द्वितीय भाषा तथा तृतीय भाषा के रूप में प्रस्तावित है—

प्रथम भाषा के रूप में पहली से दसवीं कक्षा तक;
द्वितीय भाषा के रूप में छठी कक्षा से दसवीं कक्षा तक; तथा
तृतीय भाषा के रूप में सातवीं कक्षा से दसवीं कक्षा तक ।

परिषद् में इस दृष्टि से भाषा अध्यापन के लिए विभिन्न स्तरों की पाठ्यपुस्तकें तैयार की गई हैं। परिषद् द्वारा द्वितीय भाषा के रूप में पढ़ाई जाने वाली पाठ्यपुस्तकों की दो शृंखलाएँ इसके पूर्व तैयार की गई थीं। नवीं, दसवीं कक्षा की पाठ्यपुस्तकों के निर्माण की इस नई शृंखला में निम्नलिखित बातों पर विशेष बल दिया गया है :

(क) ऐसी पाठ्यसामग्री एवं शैक्षिक क्रियाओं का समावेश जिनसे विद्यार्थियों में संविधान में निर्दिष्ट मूल कर्तव्यों का पालन, सभी के लिए सभी मानव अधिकार के प्रति आस्था उत्पन्न हो और उनमें तर्कसंगत वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण का विकास हो ।

(ख) पाठ्यचर्या एवं पाठ्यसामग्री भारतीय जीवन-परिस्थितियों तथा सामाजिक एवं सांस्कृतिक परिवेश पर आधारित हों और उनमें वांछित भावी विकास की दिशा भी परिलक्षित हो ।

(ग) पाठ्यपुस्तकें बालकों के भावात्मक एवं बौद्धिक उत्कर्ष, चरित्र-निर्माण तथा स्वस्थ मनोवृत्ति के विकास की दृष्टि से प्रेरणादायी सिद्ध हों, उनके द्वारा विद्यार्थियों में स्वयं शिक्षा एवं अधिकाधिक ज्ञानार्जन की उत्कंठा जागृत हो और वे निर्धारित पाठ्य-विषय तक ही सीमित न रहकर विशद एवं व्यापक अध्ययन के लिए जिज्ञासु तथा तत्पर बने रहें ।

(घ) यह पुस्तक विद्यार्थियों में पठन रुचि विकसित करने के लिए तैयार की गई है। पूरक पठन की इस पुस्तक में विद्यार्थियों की रुचि के अनुसार कहानियाँ संकलित की गई हैं। इन कहानियों को पढ़ने के साथ ही उन्हें इस प्रकार की अन्य सामग्री को पढ़ने की प्रेरणा मिलेगी । इसी आशा से इस पूरक पठन की पुस्तक को तैयार किया गया है ।

इस कार्य को सभी दृष्टियों से परिपूर्ण एवं प्रामाणिक बनाने के लिए राष्ट्रीय स्तर के विषय-विशेषज्ञों, अधिकारी विद्वानों एवं शिक्षकों का सहयोग प्राप्त किया गया ।

परिषद् के सामाजिक विज्ञान एवं मानविकी शिक्षा विभाग के प्रो. रामजन्म शर्मा और डा. चन्द्रा सदायत ने पुस्तक का संपादन किया है। सुश्री पूनम कुकरेजा ने पुस्तक की पाण्डुलिपि को तैयार करने में काफी सहायता की। मैं अपने इन सभी सहयोगियों के प्रति हार्दिक कृतज्ञता ज्ञापित करता हूँ ।

जिन कृति लेखकों ने अपनी रचनाएँ इस पुस्तक में सम्मिलित करने की अनुमति दी है, उनके प्रति हम विशेषरूप से अनुगृहीत हैं।

आशा है, द्वितीय भाषा के रूप में हिन्दी पढ़ने वाले छात्रों की भाषिक तथा साहित्यिक रुचियों के विकास की दृष्टि से यह पुस्तक उपादेय सिद्ध होगी। इसके परिष्कार की दृष्टि से सुविज्ञजनों द्वारा भेजे गए सुझावों और परामर्श का हम सदा स्वागत करेंगे।

अशोक कुमार शर्मा

निदेशक

नई दिल्ली

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्

कृतज्ञताज्ञापन

इस पुस्तक के निर्माण में कृपापूर्ण योगदान के लिए राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद् निम्नलिखित विद्वानों के प्रति कृतज्ञता ज्ञापित करती है :

प्रो. नामवर सिंह

प्रो. सूरजभान सिंह

प्रो. ई. विश्वनाथ अय्यर

प्रो. दिलीप सिंह

डा. मानसिंह वर्मा

डा. जयपाल सिंह तरंग

डा. कमल सत्यार्थी

डा. पूरन सहगल

डा. राजेश कुमार

डा. महेन्द्रपाल शर्मा

श्री एम. के. वेलायुधन नायर

श्रीमती रजनी शर्मा

श्रीमती बी. विजयम्मा

प्रो. निर्मला जैन

प्रो. वी. आर. जगन्नाथन

श्री निरंजन कुमार सिंह

प्रो. एन. सुन्दरम्

प्रो. रामवीर सिंह

प्रो. हरिमोहन

डा. आरसू

डा. हीरालाल बाछोतिया

डा. एच. बालसुब्रहमण्यम्

डा. रामगोपाल वर्मा

डा. (श्रीमती) संतोष माटा

श्रीमती एस. चन्द्रिका कुमारी

विषय-सूची

गांधी जी का जन्तर

तुम्हें एक जन्तर देता हूं। जब भी तुम्हें सन्देह हो या तुम्हारा अहम् तुम पर हावी होने लगे, तो यह कसौटी आजमाओ:

जो सबसे गरीब और कमजोर आदमी तुमने देखा हो, उसकी शकल याद करो और अपने दिल से पूछो कि जो कदम उठाने का तुम विचार कर रहे हो, वह उस आदमी के लिए कितना उपयोगी होगा। क्या उससे उसे कुछ लाभ पहुंचेगा? क्या उससे वह अपने ही जीवन और भाग्य पर कुछ काबू रख सकेगा? यानि क्या उससे उन करोड़ों लोगों को स्वराज्य मिल सकेगा जिनके पेट भूखे हैं और आत्मा अतृप्त है?

तब तुम देखोगे कि तुम्हारा सन्देह मिट रहा है और अहम् समाप्त होता जा रहा है।

हिन्दी कहानी : एक परिचय

मनुष्य के मन में किस्सा कहानी सुनने-सुनाने की जो स्वाभाविक वृत्ति है उसने ही बीसवीं शताब्दी के आरंभिक वर्षों में आधुनिक कहानी का रूप ग्रहण किया। बीसवीं शताब्दी के पहले दशक में **सरस्वती** में जो कहानियाँ प्रकाशित हुईं उन्होंने ही हिन्दी कहानी को नया रूप और आकार दिया। इन प्रारंभिक कहानियों में प्रमुख हैं – किशोरीलाल गोस्वामी की **इन्दुमती** (1900), भगवान दास की **प्लेग की चुड़ैल** (1902), रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की **ग्यारह वर्ष का समय** (1903) और **बंगमहिला**, राजेन्द्रबाला घोष की **दुलाईवाली** (1907)। इसी क्रम में आगे चलकर कुछ और उल्लेखनीय कहानियाँ प्रकाशित हुईं जिनमें विश्वंभरनाथ शर्मा 'कौशिक' की **रक्षा-बंधन** (1913), चन्द्रधर शर्मा गुलेरी की **उसने कहा था** (1915) और प्रेमचन्द की **पंच-परमेश्वर** (1916)। **सरस्वती** पत्रिका के अलावा जयशंकर प्रसाद द्वारा संपादित **इन्दु** पत्रिका का भी हिन्दी कहानी के विकास में महत्त्वपूर्ण योगदान है। इस पत्रिका में प्रकाशित जयशंकर प्रसाद की **ग्राम** (1911) और राजा राधिकारमण प्रसाद सिंह की **कानों में कंगना** (1913) उल्लेखनीय कहानियाँ हैं।

इस प्रकार हिन्दी-कहानी के आरंभ में ही प्रेमचंद, गुलेरी, कौशिक और जयशंकर प्रसाद जैसे कहानीकार मिल गए थे, जिनके सधे हाथों में पहुँचकर हिन्दी-कहानी का कलात्मक विकास हुआ।

गुलेरी ने केवल तीन कहानियों की रचना की – **सुखमय जीवन**, **बुद्धू का काँटा** और **उसने कहा था**। इसमें **उसने कहा था** उनकी श्रेष्ठ कहानी है। इस कहानी में पात्रों

का तीव्र मानसिक द्वंद्व और द्रुत घटनाचक्र का प्रभावशाली चित्रण हुआ है ; किंतु हिन्दी कहानी को व्यापकता प्रदान करने का श्रेय प्रेमचन्द और जयशंकर प्रसाद को है ।

प्रेमचन्द ने लगभग तीन सौ कहानियाँ लिखीं । **पंच-परमेश्वर** से लेकर **कफन** तक प्रेमचन्द ने जो कहानियाँ लिखी हैं उनमें उन्होंने भारतीय जन-जीवन के सुख-दुख, आशा-निराशा और उत्थान-पतन के यथार्थ और सशक्त चित्र खींचे हैं । उनकी लेखनी से जीवन का कोई पक्ष छूटा नहीं । प्रेमचन्द की कहानियों में विषयवस्तु और शैली-शिल्प दोनों की विविधता मिलती है । बोलचाल की भाषा में लिखी प्रेमचन्द की कहानियाँ ठेठ भारतीय हैं ।

प्रेमचन्द के समकालीन किंतु उनसे भिन्न प्रवृत्ति वाले कहानीकार हैं – जयशंकर प्रसाद। उनकी कहानियों में इतिहास और कल्पना तथा आदर्श और यथार्थ का सामंजस्य मिलता है । जयशंकर प्रसाद कवि और नाटककार भी थे इसलिए उनकी कहानियों में काव्यात्मक-नाटकीय शैली का प्रयोग दिखाई देता है । **पुरस्कार**, **ममता**, **आकाशदीप**, **मधुआ** आदि उनकी प्रसिद्ध कहानियाँ हैं ।

इसी युग के अन्य कहानीकारों में विश्वंभरनाथ शर्मा 'कौशिक' और सुदर्शन ने प्रेमचन्द की ही परंपरा का निर्वाह करते हुए सामाजिक-पारिवारिक कहानियों की रचना की । चंडीप्रसाद 'हृदयेश' और रायकृष्णदास ने प्रसाद से प्रभावित होकर कहानियाँ लिखीं । अन्य कहानीकारों में पांडेय बेचन शर्मा 'उग्र', विनोदशंकर व्यास, चतुरसेन शास्त्री, भगवतीप्रसाद वाजपेयी, भगवतीचरण वर्मा तथा अन्नपूर्णानंद प्रमुख हैं। इनमें से कुछ ने ऐतिहासिक विषयों को आधार बनाकर सुंदर कहानियों की रचना की तो कुछ ने सामाजिक यथार्थ को आधार बनाया । इसी प्रसंग में निराला की कहानियाँ भी उल्लेखनीय हैं, जिनमें यथार्थ जीवन के कुछ बड़े ही तीखे व्यंग्य-चित्र मिलते हैं।

प्रेमचन्द के बाद हिन्दी कहानी के विकास में योगदान देने वाले दो कहानीकार विशेष उल्लेखनीय हैं – जैनेन्द्र और यशपाल । जैनेन्द्र ने व्यक्ति की मनोवैज्ञानिक समस्याओं को अपनी कहानी में महत्त्व दिया । उनकी कहानियों में पात्रों के अन्तर्द्वन्द्व और दार्शनिक चिंतन को अभिव्यक्ति मिली। इलाचन्द्र जोशी और अज्ञेय ने भी मनोवैज्ञानिक कहानियाँ लिखीं ।

इसी समय जैनेन्द्र और अज्ञेय से भिन्न सामाजिक यथार्थ और मार्क्सवादी चिंतन को आधार बनाकर समाज की निर्मम आलोचना करने वाले प्रगतिशील कथाकार यशपाल का हिन्दी-कहानी में आगमन होता है । यशपाल प्रेमचन्द की यथार्थवादी परंपरा को आगे बढ़ाने वाले कहानीकार माने जाते हैं । सामाजिक विसंगतियों का चित्रण और समानता की आकांक्षा उनकी कहानियों की मुख्य विशेषता है ।

हिन्दी कहानी के विकास के इस दौर के कुछ अन्य महत्त्वपूर्ण कहानीकार हैं – उपेन्द्रनाथ अश्क, कृश्न चन्दर, अमृतलाल नागर, द्विजेन्द्रनाथ मिश्र 'निर्गुण', विष्णु प्रभाकर, चन्द्रकिरण सोनरिक्सा, रांगेय राघव आदि । पिछले युग के अनेक कहानीकारों ने भी कुछ महत्त्वपूर्ण कहानियाँ इस दौर में लिखीं ।

सन् 1947 में देश के स्वतंत्र हो जाने के बाद हिन्दी-कहानी में कथ्य और शिल्प की दृष्टि से कुछ नई प्रवृत्तियों का जन्म हुआ । इनमें **आंचलिक कहानी** और **नई कहानी** विशेषरूप से उल्लेखनीय हैं । इस युग में कुछ कहानीकारों ने ग्रामांचल को विषयवस्तु के रूप में चुना । ये गाँव प्रेमचन्द के गाँव से भिन्न हैं । मिट्टी की महक के साथ अंचल विशेष की बोली-बानी का भी गहरा पुट इन कहानियों में दिखाई देता है । फणीश्वरनाथ रेणु इस आंचलिक प्रवृत्ति के सबसे समर्थ कथाकार माने जाते हैं । अन्य कहानीकारों में शिवप्रसाद सिंह, मार्कंडेय, शेखर जोशी, शैलेश मटियानी, रामदरश मिश्र आदि के नाम भी आंचलिक कहानीकारों में उल्लेखनीय हैं।

छठे दशक की कहानियों को देखते हुए कहा जा सकता है कि इस समय कहानियों का एक नया दौर शुरू हो गया । स्वाधीनता के बाद बदली हुई सामाजिक-राजनीति परिस्थितियों के कारण इस युग की कहानियाँ विषयवस्तु और शिल्प दोनों ही दृष्टियों से पूर्ववर्ती कहानियों से भिन्न हैं । इन कहानीकारों ने जीवन की विसंगतियों, विडम्बनाओं तथा भोगे हुए यथार्थ को अपनी कहानियों में कलात्मक ढंग से व्यक्त किया । एक ओर मोहन राकेश, कमलेश्वर, राजेन्द्र यादव, निर्मल वर्मा, मन्नू भंडारी, उषा प्रियवंदा की कहानियों से **नई कहानी** आंदोलन शुरू हुआ तो दूसरी ओर अमरकांत, भीष्म साहनी,

शेखर जोशी, इब्राहीम शरीफ, हरिशंकर परसाई आदि सामाजिक यथार्थ के निर्मम चित्रण, मानवीय करुणा तथा व्यंग्य की दृष्टि से प्रेमचन्द की परंपरा को विकसित कर रहे थे ।

इस दौर में कृष्णा सोबती, मन्नू भंडारी, उषा प्रियवंदा, शिवानी, शशिप्रभा शास्त्री जैसी कई प्रतिभा सम्पन्न महिला कथाकारों ने मार्मिक कहानियाँ लिखीं । मृणाल पांडे, मंजुल भगत, मृदुला गर्ग, मेहरून्निसा परवेज़, ममता कालिया, चित्रा मुद्गल, निरूपमा सेवती, दीप्ति खंडेलवाल, राजी सेठ, नासिरा शर्मा, गीतांजलिश्री, मैत्रेयी पुष्पा आदि महिला कहानीकारों की अब एक लंबी और सशक्त परंपरा विकसित हो रही है ।

1962 में भारत चीन सीमा संघर्ष तथा 1964 में प्रधानमंत्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू के निधन के साथ ही स्वाधीन भारत का एक अध्याय समाप्त हो गया । राजनीतिक अस्थिरता, आर्थिक तंगी और विषम परिस्थितियों ने कहानीकारों की चिंतन पद्धति को प्रभावित और आंदोलित किया। इस प्रकार सातवें और आठवें दशक की कहानी में एक और मोड़ आया । नई कहानी का भोगा हुआ यथार्थ इन नए कहानीकारों की प्रखर यथार्थवादी चेतना के लिए अपर्याप्त था ।

समाज के साथ साहित्य में भी इस काल को मोहभंग का काल कहा जाता है, इसके परिणामस्वरूप समाज और साहित्य में अनेक तरह के विद्रोह के स्वर उभरने लगे । कहानी में इसकी एक परिणति **अकहानी** के रूप में हुई और दूसरी **जनवादी** कहानी के रूप में ।

नई यथार्थ चेतना के साथ नई भाषिक संरचना को लेकर इस दौर में जो कहानीकार सामने आए उनकी रचनाओं से हिन्दी कहानी को एक नया रूप मिला । इन कहानीकारों में महेन्द्र भल्ला, रवीन्द्र कालिया, ज्ञानरंजन, काशीनाथ सिंह, गिरिराज किशोर, बाल शौरि रेड्डी, विजयमोहन सिंह, इसराइल, दूधनाथ सिंह, महीप सिंह, रमेश उपाध्याय, बदीउज्जमाँ, असगर वजाहत, संजीव, शिवमूर्ति, स्वयं प्रकाश, उदय प्रकाश आदि उल्लेखनीय हैं । इन कहानीकारों ने बदलते हुए जीवन मूल्यों को अपनी कहानियों में व्यक्त किया है ।

आज हिन्दी कहानी विषय और शिल्प की विविधता के साथ एक सशक्त और लोकप्रिय विधा है, जिसे अनेक पीढ़ियों के नए-पुराने रचनाकार अपनी लेखनी के माध्यम से समृद्ध कर रहे हैं ।

विश्वंभरनाथ शर्मा 'कौशिक'

(जन्म 1890 ई. मृत्यु 1944 ई.)

विश्वंभरनाथ शर्मा 'कौशिक' का जन्म तत्कालीन पंजाब प्रांत के अंबाला ज़िले में हुआ। कानपुर में उन्होंने मैट्रिक तक स्कूली शिक्षा प्राप्त की और साहित्य सेवा में लग गए। हिन्दी के अतिरिक्त उन्हें उर्दू और अंग्रेजी का भी अच्छा ज्ञान था। संगीत और फोटोग्राफी के प्रति उनमें विशेष रुचि थी।

कौशिक जी मुख्यरूप से कहानीकार थे, किन्तु उनके दो उपन्यास **माँ** और **भिखारिणी** भी हिन्दी जगत में प्रसिद्ध हैं। विजयानंद दूबे के छद्म नाम से उन्होंने तत्कालीन मासिक पत्रिका **चाँद** में कुछ विनोदपूर्ण पत्र भी लिखे थे, जिन्हें बाद में पुस्तक रूप में संकलित किया गया।

प्रेमचंद युग के उल्लेखनीय कथाकार कौशिक जी की कहानियों में आदर्शवाद और भावुकता की प्रधानता है। उन्होंने अपनी कहानियों में कथावस्तु, चरित्र-चित्रण और वातावरण की यथार्थ अभिव्यक्ति के साथ पात्रों के मनोविश्लेषण पर समुचित ध्यान दिया है। स्वाभाविक गद्य शैली का विकास उनकी कहानियों की एक अन्य विशेषता है।

प्रमुख रचनाएँ

चित्रशाला, **मणिमाला** (कहानी संग्रह), **माँ**, **भिखारिणी** (उपन्यास),
दूबे जी की डायरी (पत्र संग्रह)।

अशिक्षित का हृदय प्रकृति के साथ मनुष्य के भावात्मक संबंध को व्यक्त करने वाली अत्यंत मार्मिक कहानी है । जीवन के सीधे-सच्चे आदर्शों पर चलने वाले मनोहर का अपने पिता द्वारा लगाए गए नीम के पेड़ से आत्मीय लगाव है । अभाव और विवशता के कारण उसे वह पेड़ जमींदार के यहाँ गिरवी रखना पड़ता है । जमींदार उस पेड़ को कटवाने पर उतारू है, पर मनोहरसिंह अपनी जान देकर भी उस पेड़ को बचाने का संकल्प करता है । गाँव का बालक तेजा मनोहरसिंह की भावनाओं को समझता है और अपने प्रयास से पेड़ को बचाने में सफल हो जाता है । मनोहरसिंह को तेजा जैसा सही उत्तराधिकारी मिल जाता है और वह उस पेड़ को तेजा को सौंप देता है

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अशिक्षित का हृदय

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बूढ़ा मनोहरसिंह विनीत भाव से बोला – "सरकार, अभी तो मेरे पास रुपए हैं नहीं, होते, तो दे देता। ऋण का पाप तो देने ही से कटेगा। फिर, आपके रुपए को कोई जोखिम नहीं। मेरा नीम का पेड़ गिरवी धरा हुआ है। वह पेड़ कुछ न होगा, तो पचीस-तीस रुपए का होगा। इतना पुराना पेड़ गाँव भर में दूसरा नहीं।"

ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह बोले – "डेढ़ साल का ब्याज मिलाकर कुल पचीस रुपए होते हैं। यह रुपया अदा कर दो, नहीं तो हम तुम्हारा पेड़ कटवा लेंगे।"

मनोहरसिंह कुछ घबराकर बोला –"अरे सरकार, ऐसा अंधेर न कीजिएगा, पेड़ न कटवाइएगा। रुपए मैं दे ही दूँगा, यदि न भी दे सकूँ तो पेड़ आपका हो जाएगा। पर मेरे ऊपर इतनी दया कीजिएगा कि उसे कटवाइएगा नहीं।"

ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह मुस्कराकर बोले – "मनोहर, तुम सठिया गए हो, तभी तो ऐसी ऊल-जलूल बातें करते हो। भला, जो पेड़ कटवाया न जाएगा तो हमारे रुपए कैसे निकलेंगे ?"

मनोहरसिंह बोला – "अन्नदाता, आपके रुपए तो जहाँ तक होगा मैं दे ही दूँगो।"

ठाकुर – "अच्छा, अब ठीक-ठीक बताओ कि रुपए कब तक दे दोगे।"

मनोहरसिंह कुछ देर सोचकर बोला –"एक सप्ताह में दे दूँगा।"

ठाकुर – "अच्छा, स्वीकार है। एक सप्ताह में अवश्य दे देना, नहीं तो पेड़ हमारा हो जाएगा। हमारी जो इच्छा होगी, वह करेंगे। चाहे कटवाएँगे, चाहे रखेंगे।"

मनोहर – "और चाहे जो कीजिएगा, उसे कटवाइएगा नहीं, इतनी आपसे प्रार्थना है।"

ठाकुर –"खैर, हमारा जो जी चाहेगा करेंगे तुम्हें फिर कुछ कहने का अधिकार नहीं रहेगा।"

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मनोहरसिंह की आयु 55 वर्ष के लगभग है। अपनी जवानी उसने फौज में व्यतीत की थी। इस समय वह संसार में अकेला है। उसके परिवार में कोई नहीं। गाँव में दो-एक दूर-दूर के रिश्तेदार रहते हैं उन्हीं के यहाँ अपना भोजन बनवा लेता है। न कहीं आता है न कहीं जाता है। दिन-रात अपने टूटे-फूटे मकान में पड़ा ईश्वर भजन किया करता है।

एक वर्ष पूर्व उसे कुछ खेती कराने की सनक सवार हुई थी। उसने ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह की कुछ भूमि लगान पर लेकर खेती कराई भी थी। पर उसके दुर्भाग्य से उस साल अनावृष्टि के कारण कुछ पैदावार न हुई। ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह का लगान न पहुँचा। मनोहरसिंह को जो कुछ पेंशन मिलती थी, वह उसके भोजन, वस्त्र भर ही को होती थी। अंत में जब ठाकुर साहब को लगान न मिला, तो उन्होंने उसका एक नीम का वृक्ष, जो उसकी झोंपड़ी के द्वार पर लगा था, गिरवी रख लिया। यह नीम का वृक्ष बहुत पुराना और उसके पिता के हाथ का लगाया हुआ था।

मनोहरसिंह को एक सप्ताह का अवकाश दिया गया। उसने बहुत कुछ दौड़-धूप की, दो-चार आदमियों से कर्ज़ माँगा, पर किसी ने उसे रुपए न दिए। लोगों ने सोचा, वृद्ध आदमी है। न जाने कब ढुलक जाए। ऐसी दशा में रुपया किससे वसूल होगा? मनोहर

चारों ओर से हताश होकर बैठ गया और धड़कते हुए हृदय से सप्ताह व्यतीत होने की राह देखने लगा।

दोपहर का समय है। मनोहरसिंह एक चारपाई पर नीम के नीचे लेटा हुआ है। नीम की शीतल वायु के झोंकों से उसे बड़ा सुख मिल रहा है। वह पड़ा-पड़ा सोच रहा है कि परसों तक यदि रुपए न पहुँचेंगे तो ठाकुर साहब इस पेड़ को कटवा डालेंगे। यह पेड़ मेरे पिता के हाथ का लगाया हुआ है। मुझे और मेरे परिवार को दातून और छाया देता रहा है। इसको ठाकुर साहब कटवा डालेंगे।

यह विचार मनोहरसिंह को ऐसा दुखदाई प्रतीत हुआ कि वह चारपाई से उठकर बैठ गया और वृक्ष की ओर मुँह करके बोला–"यदि संसार में किसीने मेरा साथ दिया है तो तूने। यदि संसार में किसी ने निःस्वार्थ भाव से मेरी सेवा की है तो तूने। अब भी मेरी आँखों के आगे वह दृश्य आ जाता है, जब मेरे पिता तुझे सींचा करते थे। तू उस समय बिलकुल बच्चा था। मैं तेरे लिए तालाब से पानी भरकर लाया करता था। पिता कहा करते थे – बेटा मनोहर, यह मेरे हाथ की निशानी है। इससे जब-जब तुझे और तेरे बाल-बच्चों को सुख पहुँचेगा, तब-तब मेरी याद आएगी। पिता का देहांत हुए चालीस वर्ष व्यतीत हो गए। उनके कहने के अनुसार, तू सदैव उनकी कीर्ति का स्मरण कराता रहा और जब तक रहेगा, उनकी याद दिलाता रहेगा। मुझे वह दिन अच्छी तरह याद है, जब मैं अपने मित्रों सहित तेरी डालियों पर चढ़कर खेला करता था। इस समय संसार में तू ही एक मेरा पुराना मित्र है। तुझे वह दुष्ट काटना चाहता है। हाँ, काटेगा क्यों नहीं। देखूँ, कैसे काटता है"?

उसी समय उधर से एक पन्द्रह-सालह वर्ष का लड़का निकला। वृद्ध मनोहर को बड़बड़ाते देख उसने पूछा –"चाचा, किससे बातें करते हो। यहाँ तो कोई है भी नहीं।"

बुड्ढे ने चौंककर लड़के की ओर देखा और कहा –"क्या करूँ बेटा तेजा, अपने कर्म से बातें कर रहा हूँ। ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह के मुझ पर कुछ रुपए हैं। तुझे तो बेटा मालूम

ही है कि परसाल खेती में एक दाना भी नहीं हुआ। होता तो क्या मैं उनका लगान रख लेता। अब वह कहते हैं लगान के रुपए दो, नहीं पेड़ कटवा लेंगे। इस पेड़ को कटवा लेंगे जो मेरे बाप के हाथ का लगाया हुआ है। यह बात तो देखो। समय का फेर है, जो ऐसी-ऐसी बातें सुननी पड़ती हैं। बेटा मैंने सारी उमर फ़ौज में बिताई है। बड़ी-बड़ी लड़ाइयाँ और मैदान देखें हैं। वह बेचारे हैं किस खेत की मूली ? आज शरीर में बल होता तो इनकी मजाल थी कि मेरे पेड़ के लिए ऐसा कहते ? मुँह नोच लेता। मैंने कभी नाक पर मक्खी नहीं बैठने दी। बड़े-बड़े साहब-बहादुरों से लड़ पड़ता था। यह बेचारे हैं क्या ? बड़े ठाकुर की दुम बने घूमते हैं। मैं सच कहता हूँ अभी इस गाँव के डाँड़े पर गोली चलने लगे, तो ठाकुर साहब छिपते दिखलाई पड़ेंगे। मैंने तो तोप के मुँह पर डटकर बन्दूकें चलाई हैं, पर बेटा समय सब कुछ करा लेता है। जिन्होंने कभी तोप की सूरत नहीं देखी, वह वीर और ठाकुर बने घूमते हैं। हमें आँखें दिखाते हैं कि रुपए दो, नहीं पेड़ कटवा लेंगे। देखें, कैसे पेड़ कटवाते हैं। लाख बुड्ढा हो गया हूँ, पर अब भी चार-छः के लिए बहुत हूँ। जब तलवार लेकर डट जाऊँगा तो भागते ही दिखलाई पड़ेंगे। बेटा सौ बात की एक बात तो यह है कि मुझे तो एक दिन मरना ही है। चल-चलाव लग रहा है। मैं बड़ी-बड़ी लड़ाइयों से जीता लौट आया। समझूँगा यह भी एक लड़ाई ही है। अब इसी लड़ाई में मेरा अंत है। पर इतना समझ रखना कि मेरे जीते जी इस पेड़ की एक डाल भी कोई काटने नहीं पाएगा। उनका रुपया गले बराबर है। भगवान जाने मेरे पास होता तो मैं दे देता! नहीं है, तो क्या किया जाए ? पर यह भी नहीं हो सकता कि ठाकुर साहब मेरा पेड़ कटवा लें और मैं टुकुर-टुकुर देखता रहूँ।"

तेजा बोला –"चाचा, जाने भी दो, इन बातों में क्या रखा है। पेड़ कटवाने को कहते हैं, काट लेने देना। इस पेड़ में तुम्हारा रखा ही क्या है ? पेड़ तो नित्य ही कटा करते हैं।"

मनोहरसिंह बिगड़कर बोला –"आखिर लड़के ही हो न ! अरे बेटा, यह पेड़ ऐसा-वैसा नहीं है। यह पेड़ मेरे भाई के बराबर है। मैं इसे अपना सगा भाई समझता।

हूँ। यह मेरे पिता के हाथ का लगाया हुआ है और किसी के हाथ का नहीं। जब मैं तुमसे भी छोटा था तब से इसका मेरा साथ है। मैं बरसों इस पर खेला हूँ, बरसों इसकी मीठी-मीठी निबोलियाँ खाई हैं। इसकी दातुन आज तक करता हूँ। गाँव में सैकड़ों पेड़ हैं, पर मुझसे कसम ले लो, जो मैंने कभी उनकी एक पत्ती तक छुई हो। जब मेरे घर में आप ही इतना बड़ा पेड़ खड़ा हुआ हो तब मुझे दूसरे पेड़ को हाथ लगाने की क्या पड़ी है। दूसरे, मुझे किसी और पेड़ की दातुन अच्छी नहीं लगती।"

तेजा बोला – "चाचा, बिना रुपए दिए तो यह पेड़ बच नहीं सकता।"

मनोहरसिंह – "बेटा, ईश्वर जानता है, मेरे पास रुपए होते तो मैं आज ही दे देता। पर क्या करूँ, लाचार हूँ। मेरे घर में ऐसी कोई चीज़ भी नही बची जो बेच कर दे दूँ। मुझे आज इस बात का बड़ा दुख है। गाँव भर में घूम आया, किसीने उधार न दिए। क्या करूँ, बेटा तेजा, सच जानना जो यह पेड़ कट जाएगा तो मुझे बड़ा दुख होगा। मेरा बुढ़ापा बिगड़ जाएगा। अभी तक मुझे कोई दुख न था। खाता था, ईश्वर भजन करता था। पर अब घोर दुख हो जाएगा"।

यह कह कर वृद्ध मनोहरसिंह ने आँखों में आँसू भर लिए।

तेजा वृद्ध मनोहरसिंह का कष्ट सुनकर बड़ा दुखी हुआ। तेजा गाँव के एक प्रतिष्ठित किसान का बेटा था। उसका पिता डेढ़-दो सौ बीघे भूमि पर खेती करता था। मनोहरसिंह को तेजा चाचा कहा करता था।

तेजा ने कहा, चाचा,"बापू से यह हाल कहा है ?"

मनोहर –"सबसे कह चुका बेटा। तेरा बापू तो अब बड़ा आदमी हो गया है। वह मेरे जैसे गरीबों की बात क्यों सुनने लगा। एक ज़माना था, जब वह दिन-दिन भर मेरे द्वार पर पड़ा रहता था। घर में लड़ाई होती थी, तो मेरे ही यहाँ भाग आता था और दो-दो, तीन तीन-दिन तक रहता था। वही तुम्हारा बापू अब सीधे बात नहीं करता। इसीसे कहता हूँ समय की बात है।"

तेजा ने पूछा –"कितने रुपए देने से पेड़ बच सकता है ।"

मनोहर –"पचीस रुपए देने पड़ेंगे ।"

तेजा –"पचीस रुपए तो बहुत हैं चाचा ।"

मनोहर –"पास नहीं हैं तो बहुत ही हैं । होते तो थोड़े थे ।"

तेजा –"दस-पाँच रुपए की बात होती तो मैं ही कहीं से ला देता ।"

मनोहर – "बेटा, भगवान तुम्हें चिरंजीव रखे । तूने एक बात तो कही । गाँववालों ने, तो इतना भी नहीं कहा । खैर देखा जाएगा । पर इतना तू याद रखना कि मेरे जीते जी इस पेड़ को कोई हाथ नहीं लगाने पाएगा ।"

(3)

एक सप्ताह बीत गया । आज आठवाँ दिन है । मनोहरसिंह रुपयों का प्रबंध नहीं कर सका । वह समझ गया कि अब पेड़ का बचना कठिन है । पर साथ ही वह यह भी निश्चय कर चुका था कि उसके जीते जी कोई उसको काट नहीं सकता । उसने अपनी तलवार भी निकाल ली और साफ़ करके रख ली थी । अब वह हर समय पेड़ के नीचे ही पड़ा रहता था । तलवार सिरहाने रखी रहती थी ।

आठवें दिन दोपहर के समय शिवपालसिंह ने मनोहरसिंह को बुलवाया । मनोहरसिंह तलवार बगल में दाबे अकड़ता हुआ ठाकुर साहब के सामने पहुँचा ।

शिवपालसिंह और उसके आस-पास बैठे हुए लोग बुड्ढे की इस सज-धज पर मुस्कराए । शिवपालसिंह ने कहा –"सुनते हो मनोहरसिंह, एक सप्ताह बीत गया अब पेड़ हमारा हो गया । आज हम उसकी कटाई शुरू कराते हैं ।"

मनोहर – "आपको अधिकार है । मुझे रुपया मिलता तो दे ही देता और अब भी यदि मिल जाएगा तो दे दूँगा । मेरी नियत में बेईमानी नहीं है । मैं फ़ौज में रहा हूँ, बेईमानी का नाम नहीं जानता ?"

शिवपाल –"तो अब हम उसे कटवा लें न ?"

मनोहर –"यह मैं कैसे कहूँ, आपका जो जी चाहे कीजिए ।"

यह कहकर मनोहरसिंह उसी प्रकार अकड़ता हुआ ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह केसामने से चला आया और अपने पेड़ के नीचे चारपाई पर आकर बैठ गया ।

दोपहर ढलने पर चार-पाँच आदमी कुल्हाड़ियाँ लेकर आते दिखाई पड़े । मनोहरसिंह झट म्यान से तलवार निकाल डटकर खड़ा हो गया और ललकार कर बोला –"सँभलकर आगे बढ़ना ! जो किसी ने भी पेड़ में कुल्हाड़ी लगाई तो उसकी और अपनी जान एक कर दूँगा ।"

मज़दूर बुड्ढे की ललकार सुन और तलवार देखकर भाग खड़े हुए ।

जब शिवपालसिंह को यह बात मालूम हुई तब पहले तो वे बहुत हँसे परन्तु पीछे कुछ सोचकर उनका चेहरा क्रोध से लाल हो गया । वह बोले – "इस बुड्ढे की शामत आई है । हमारा माल है । हम चाहे काटें, चाहे रखें । वह कौन होता है । चलो तो मेरे साथ, देखूँ वह क्या करता है ?"

शिवपालसिंह मज़दूरों तथा दो लट्ठबंद आदमियों को लेकर पहुँचे । उन्हें आते देख बुड्ढा फिर तलवार निकालकर खड़ा हो गया ।

शिवपालसिंह उसके सामने पहुँच कर बोले –"क्यों मनोहर यह क्या बात है ?"

मनोहरसिंह बोला –"बात केवल इतनी है कि मेरे रहते इसे कोई हाथ नहीं लगा सकता । यह मैं जानता हूँ कि अब पेड़ आपका है । मगर यह होने पर भी मैं इसे कटता हुआ नहीं देख सकता ।"

शिवपालसिंह –"पर हम तो इसे कटवाए बिना न मानेंगे ।" मनोहरसिंह को भी क्रोध आ गया । वह बोला –"ठाकुर साहब, जो आप सच्चे ठाकुर हैं, तो इस पेड़ को कटवा लें । जो मैं असली ठाकुर हूँगा तो इसे न कटने दूँगा ।"

ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह अपने आदमियों से बोले –"देखते क्या हो ? इस बुड्ढे को पकड़ लो और पेड़ काटना शुरू कर दो ।"

ठीक उसी समय तेजासिंह दौड़ता हुआ आया और मनोहरसिंह को कुछ रुपए देकर बोला –"लो चाचा, ये रुपए, अब तुम्हारा पेड़ बच गया ।"

मनोहरसिंह ने रुपए गिनकर ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह से पूछा –"कहिये ठाकुर साहब, रुपए लेना हो तो ये हाजिर हैं और जो पेड़ कटवाना हो तो आगे बढ़िये ।"

ठाकुर –"रुपए अब हम नहीं ले सकते । रुपए देने की मियाद बीत गई । अब तो पेड़ कटेगा ।"

मनोहरसिंह अकड़ कर बोला –"ठीक है, अब मालूम हुआ कि आप केवल मुझे दुख पहुँचाने के लिए पेड़ कटवा रहे हैं, अच्छा कटवाइये । मुझे भी देखना है आप किस तरह पेड़ कटवाते हैं ।"

इतनी ही देर में गाँव भर में यह खबर फैल गई कि शिवपालसिंह मनोहरसिंह का पेड़ कटवा रहे हैं, पर मनोहरसिंह तलवार खींचे खड़ा है । किसी को पेड़ के पास नहीं जाने देता । यह खबर फैलते ही गाँव भर जमा हो गया ।

गाँव के दो-चार प्रतिष्ठित आदमियों ने मनोहरसिंह से पूछा –"क्या बात है मनोहरसिंह ।"

मनोहरसिंह सब हाल कहकर बोला –"मैं रुपए देता हूँ । ठाकुर नहीं लेते । कहते हैं कल तक मियाद थी । अब तो पेड़ कटेगा ।"

शिवपालसिंह बोले –"कल तक यह रुपए दे देता तो पेड़ पर हमारा कोई अधिकार न होता । अब हमारा उस पर पूरा अधिकार है । हम पेड़ अवश्य कटवाएँगे ।"

एक व्यक्ति बोला –"जब कल तक इसके पास रुपये नहीं थे तो आज कहाँ से आ गए।"

शिवपालसिंह का एक आदमी बोला –"तेजा ने अभी लाकर दिए हैं ।"

गाँववालों के साथ तेजा का पिता भी था । उसने यह सुनकर तेजा को पकड़ा और कहा –"क्यों बे, तूने ही रुपए चुराए थे । मैंने दोपहर को पूछा तो तीन-तेरह बकने लगा था ।"

इसके बाद तेजा के पिता ने कहा –"मनोहर, ये रुपए तेजा मेरी संदूक से चुरा लाया है । ये रुपए मेरे हैं ।"

मनोहरसिंह रुपए फेंककर बोला –"तेरे हैं तो ले जा । मैंने तेरे लड़के से रुपए नहीं माँगे थे ।"

फिर मनोहरसिंह ने तेजा से कहा –"बेटा, तूने यह बुरा काम किया । चोरी की । राम राम ! बुढ़ापे में मेरी नाक कटाने का काम किया था । ये लोग समझेंगे मैंने ही चुराने के लिए तुझसे कहा होगा ।"

तेजा बोला –"चाचा, मैं गंगा उठाकर कह सकता हूँ कि तुमने मुझसे रुपए माँगे तक नहीं, चुराने के लिए कहना तो बड़ी दूर की बात है ।"

शिवपालसिंह ने हँस कर कहा –"क्यों मनोहर अब रुपए कहाँ हैं, लाओ । रुपए ही लाओ । मैं रुपए लेने को तैयार हूँ । अब या तो अभी रुपए दे दो, या सामने से हट जाओ । झगड़ा करने से कोई लाभ नहीं होगा ।"

मनोहरसिंह बोला –" ठाकुर साहब, इन तानों से क्या फायदा । रुपए मेरे पास नहीं हैं, लेकिन पेड़ मैं कटने नहीं दूँगा ।"

शिवपालसिंह उपस्थित लोगों से बोले –"आप लोग इस बात को देखिए और न्याय कीजिए । मियाद कल तक की थी मैं आज भी रुपए लेने को तैयार हूँ । अब मेरा अपराध नहीं ! यह बुड्ढा व्यर्थ झगड़ा कर रहा है ।"

तेजासिंह यह सुनते ही आगे बढ़ा और अपनी अँगुली से सोने की अँगूठी उतार कर शिवपालसिंह से बोला –" ठाकुर साहब, यह अँगूठी एक तोले की है । आप के रुपए इससे निकल आवेंगे । आप यह अँगूठी ले जाइए । इस अँगूठी पर बापू का कोई अधिकार नहीं । यह अँगूठी मुझे मेरी नानी ने दी थी ।"

सब लोग लड़के की बात सुनकर दंग हो गए ।

यह देख तेजासिंह का पिता आगे बढ़ा और बोला –"ठाकुर साहब, लीजिए ये पच्चीस रुपए और अब इस पेड़ को छोड़ दीजिए। आप अभी कह चुके हैं कि रुपए मिल जाएँ तो पेड़ छोड़ देंगे। अतएव अपने वचन का पालन कीजिए।"

ठाकुर साहब के चेहरे का रंग उड़ गया। उन्हें विश्वास हो गया था कि अब मनोहरसिंह को रुपए मिलना असंभव है। इसीसे उन्होंने केवल अपनी उदारता दिखाने के लिए रुपए लेना स्वीकार किया था। अब वह कुछ न कह सके। कारण उन्होंने पच्चीस-तीस आदमियों के सामने रुपए लेना स्वीकार कर लिया था। वह रुपए लेकर चुपचाप चले गए।

ठाकुर साहब के चले जाने के बाद मनोहरसिंह ने तेजासिंह को बुलाकर छाती से लगाया और कहा –"बेटा, इस पेड़ को तूने ही बचाया। अतएव मैं तुझी को यह पेड़ देता हूँ। मुझे विश्वास हो गया कि मेरे पीछे तू इस पेड़ की पूरी रक्षा कर सकेगा।"

तेजा से यह कह कर उपस्थित लोगों से कहा –"भाइयों, मैं तुम सबके सामने यह पेड़ तेजासिंह को देता हूँ। तेज़ा को छोड़कर इस पर किसी का कोइ अधिकार न रहेगा।"

फिर तलवार म्यान में रखते हुए आप ही आप कहा –"पर मेरे जीते जी कोई पेड़ में हाथ नहीं लगा सकता था, अपनी और उसकी जान एक कर देता। मैंने फ़ौज में नौकरी की है। बड़ी-बड़ी लड़ाइयाँ जीती हैं। यह बेचारे हैं क्या चीज़।"

प्रश्न-अभ्यास

लघूत्तरात्मक प्रश्न

1. मनोहरसिंह ने अपने नीम के पेड़ को गिरवी क्यों रखा ?
2. ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह नीम के पेड़ पर अपना अधिकार क्यों जताने लगे ?
3. मनोहरसिंह, ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह से अपने नीम के पेड़ के लिए क्या आश्वासन चाहता था ?

4. तेजा ने मनोहरसिंह की सहायता के लिए रुपये चुराए, इसे आप कहाँ तक उचित समझते हैं ?
5. तेजा ने मनोहरसिंह की सहायता किस प्रकार की ?
6. ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह का कर्ज़ अदा हो जाने के पश्चात, मनोहरसिंह ने अपने नीम के पेड़ के विषय में क्या निर्णय लिया ?

निबंधात्मक प्रश्न

1. मनोहरसिंह की व्यथा सुनकर तेजासिंह को कैसा लगा ? स्पष्ट कीजिए।
2. मनोहरसिंह के किस कथन से तेजा प्रभावित हुआ ?
3. ठाकुर शिवपालसिंह अपने ही शब्दों में किस प्रकार फँस गए ?

अन्नपूर्णानंद

(जन्म 1895 ई. मृत्यु 1962 ई.)

अन्नपूर्णानंद का जन्म काशी में हुआ। बी.एस.सी. तक शिक्षा प्राप्त कर अन्नपूर्णानंद जी ने कुछ दिनों तक पं. मोतीलाल नेहरू के पत्र इंडिपेंडेंट में कार्य किया। बाद में काशी के प्रसिद्ध हिन्दी प्रेमी बाबू शिवप्रसाद गुप्त के निजी सचिव भी रहे। अन्नपूर्णानंद जी संपूर्णानंद जी के छोटे भाई थे।

विज्ञान के विद्यार्थी होने के बावजूद उनकी रुचि हिन्दी में हास्य-व्यंग्य की रचनाएँ लिखने में रही। उन्होंने हास्य-व्यंग्य के अनेक लेख एवं कहानियाँ लिखीं। अपनी कहानियों के माध्यम से अन्नपूर्णानंद जी ने काशी के परिवेश को बड़े ही सुंदर एवं सजीव ढंग से प्रस्तुत किया है। उन्होंने अपनी हास्य-व्यंग्य की रचनाओं में समाज की कुरीतियों, कुप्रथाओं और ढकोसलों की आलोचना की है। शालीनता और सजीवता उनके व्यंग्यों की प्रमुख विशेषता है।

मुख्य रचनाएँ

मनमयूर, **मेरी हजामत**, **मंगलमोद**, **मगन रहु चोला**, **मिसिरजी**, **महाकवि चच्वा** आदि। इनमें **महाकवि चच्वा** सबसे अधिक प्रसिद्ध है।

दावत की अदावत कहानी में एक रोचक प्रसंग का वर्णन है । लेखक ने यह दिखाने का प्रयास किया है कि दोस्तों के बीच समय-समय पर होने वाली आपसी झड़पों और परस्पर मूर्ख बनानेवाली प्रतियोगिताओं से मित्रता और घनिष्ठ होती है ।

सरल-सहज भाषा में लिखी गई इस कहानी को पढ़कर पाठक हँसी से लोट-पोट हो जाता है ।

2

दावत की अदावत

यह मैंने आज ही जाना कि जिस सड़क पर एक फुट मोटी धूल की परत चढ़ी हो वह फिर भी पक्की सड़क कहला सकती है । पर मेरे दोस्त झूठ तो बोलेंगे नहीं । उन्होंने कहा था कि पक्की सड़क है, साइकिल उठाना, आराम से चले आना ।

धूल भी ऐसी-वैसी नहीं । मैदे की तरह बारीक होने के कारण उड़ने में हवा से बाजी मारती थी । मेरी नाक को तो उसने अपने बाप का घर समझ लिया था । जितनी धूल इस समय मेरे बालों में और कपड़ों पर जमा हो गई थी उतनी से तो मेरे ही जैसा एक और मिट्टी का पुतला बन जाता ।

पाँच मील का रास्ता मेरे लिए सहारा का रेगिस्तान हो गया । मेरी साइकिल पग-पग पर धूल में फँस कर खुद भी धूल में मिल जाना चाहती थी । मैंने इतनी धूल फाँक ली थी कि अपने फेफड़ों को इस समय बाहर निकाल कर रख देता तो देखनेवाले समझते कि सीमेंट के बोरे हैं ।

खैर, किसी तरह सड़क खत्म हुई और मैं एक लंबी पगडंडी तय करके उस बाग के फाटक पर पहुँचा जिसमें आज मेरी मित्र-मंडली सुबह से ही आकर टिकी थी ।

फ़ाटक पर खड़े होकर मैंने अपने को झाड़ा-झरकारा। ज़रूरत थी फावड़े की पर मैंने हाथ ही से अपने शरीर की धूल हटाई।

मैं बिलकुल लस्त हो गया था। धूल की वैतरणी पार करने के बाद यह बाग स्वर्ग-सा प्रतीत हो रहा था। हृदय धीरे-धीरे आनंद की पेंग मारने लगा। बारह बज गये थे, मित्रों ने रसोई तैयार कर ली होगी, मेरा इंतज़ार कर रहे होंगे। पता नहीं बाटियों को लोगों ने घी में तर कर रखा है या नहीं। मैंने कह तो दिया था।

बाग में मैं दाखिल हुआ। बीच में एक बारहदरी थी। चांडाल चौकड़ी वहीं ठहरी होगी। मैं उसी तरफ बढ़ा। मन में सोचता जा रहा था कि एक बार पहुँचते ही सबको खूब लताड़ूँगा कि दावत देने की आखिर यह कौन-सी जगह थी। शहर से इतनी दूर और ऐसी खराब सड़क।

लेकिन बारहदरी में कोई दिखाई न पड़ा। किसी पेड़ के नीचे सब होंगे। 'बहरी तरफ़' का मज़ा पेड़ों ही के नीचे आता है।

मैंने सारा बाग छान डाला, कहीं किसी की गंध भी न थी। आखिर मामला क्या है? दूर पर एक माली कुछ काम करता दिखाई पड़ा। उसके पास जाकर मैंने पूछा – "क्यों भाई! आज सुबह शहर से कुछ लोग यहाँ सैर के लिए आए थे?"

"नाहीं तो!" उसने कहा।

"अरे मुरारी नाम का कोई आदमी नहीं आया था? इकहरा बदन, साँवला रंग, गाल पर एक बड़ा-सा मस्सा।"

"नाहीं, कोई नहीं आवा रहा।"

"मुरली नाम का कोई आदमी? लम्बा कद, चपटी नाक . . .।"

"नाहीं।"

"और माधो नाम का?"

उसने झुँझला कर रहा – "नाहीं साहब! माधो नाम का भी कोई नाहीं आवा रहा, और मुन्नू, महँगी, मँगरू, मेवा, मोहन, मुनेस्सर, नाम का भी कोई नाहीं आवा रहा।"

मैं अपना सिर पकड़ कर वहीं बैठ गया । मैं फिर मूर्ख बना, इसी एक साल में तीसरी बार ।

पहली बार, गंगा में नाव पर इन बदमाशों ने मुझे दावत के लिए बुलाया और मूर्ख बनाकर सोता हुआ छोड़ कर भाग गए । दूसरी बार, खुद सब खा-पीकर मुरारी के मकान पर आए थे, मुझे दावत के नाम पर वहीं रोक रखा, पास के किसी कमरे में जलते तवे पर पानी के छींटे दे-देकर मुझे भुलावा दिया कि खाना तैयार हो रहा है, अंत में रात के बारह बजे मैं खाली पेट रोता-कलपता घर लौटा ।

और आज यह तीसरी बार । गरमी का दिन, दोपहर का समय, शहर से कोसों दूर और ऐसी खराब सड़क ।

मैंने उस माली से कहा – "जरा पाँच मिनट के लिए अपने कानों में उँगली तो डाल लो ।"

"काहे ?" – उसने चकित होकर पूछा ।

"अपने दोस्तों को मैं गाली दूँगा ।"

"साहब, फ़जूल हमारा बखत मत खराब करो ।"

रोता-झींकता मैं उसी 'पक्की' सड़क से लौटा । मैं था साइकिल पर सवार पर यदि साइकिल ही मेरे ऊपर सवार होती तब भी उसे आगे बढ़ाने में मुझे इससे अधिक जोर न लगाना पड़ता । धूप की तेज़ी के साथ-साथ हवा भी तेज़ हो गई थी । धूल की बहार इस समय मैं आखों से कम, आँखों में ही अधिक देख रहा था ।

साढ़े तीन बज़े के करीब मैं शहर पहुँचा । मैं थकावट और भूख से चूर-चूर हो रहा था पर इस समय मुझे सिर्फ एक धुन थी – मुरारी को पकड़ कर पीटने की । वही ऐसी शरारतों का आविष्कारक और सूत्रधार होता है ।

मैं सीधे मुरारी के मकान पर पहुँचा । उसके छोटे भाई से भेंट हुई । मैंने पूछा – "मुरारी है ?"

"नहीं ।"

"कहाँ गया ?"

"मैं नहीं जानता ।"

"आप बहुत थके-माँदे जान पड़ते है । जल पीजिएगा ?"

"मैं इस समय मुरारी के खून का प्यासा हूँ । आए तो उससे कह देना ।"

पास ही में मुरली का मकान था । वहाँ गया, वह भी न मिला । माधो से भी भेंट न हुई । मैं समझ गया कि सब के सब जानबूझकर कहीं छिपे हुए हैं । यह तो वे सब जानते ही होंगे कि इस समय मैं ज़्यादा खतरनाक हो रहा था ।

मैं अपने मकान की ओर चला । रास्ते में पंडित नेकीराम से भेंट हो गई । वे इसी जिले में बी.एन.डबल्यू. रेलवे के राहुलगंज नामक स्टेशन के स्टेशन-मास्टर हैं । मेरा कुछ एहसान उनके ऊपर था, इससे मेरा लिहाज़ करते थे ।

नमस्कार-प्रणाम के बाद मैंने पूछा – "कहिए कहाँ जा रहे हैं ?"

"दो महीने की छुट्टी मैंने माँगी थी जो मंजूर हो गई है । एक हफ़्ते में घर जानेवाला हूँ । आज कुछ सामान खरीदने शहर आया था । आप तो कभी आते ही नहीं, कई बार प्रार्थना की कि एक रात वहीं बसेरा कीजिए ।"

"अच्छा आऊँगा । हो सका तो आपके जाने के पहले ही आऊँगा ।"

उस समय मैं भूखा-प्यासा अधिक बातें नहीं कर सकता था । मैं किसी तरह गिरता-पड़ता घर पहुँचा ।

तीन दिन तक मुरारी, मुरली, माधो या मोहन किसी की सूरत न देख पड़ी । चौथे दिन सब के सब साथ ही मेरे मकान पर आए । पूर्व इसके कि मेरा पारा चढ़े उन सबने हँसना शुरू किया और ईश्वर झूठ न कहलाए, पन्द्रह मिनट तक लगातार सब हँसते रहे । मैं खड़ा दाँत पीसता रहा ।

मुरारी ने हँसते हुए कहा – "देखो, जब तक तुम हम लोगों को एक दावत न दे दोगे तब तक हम लोग तुम्हें इसी तरह मूर्ख बनाकर छकाया करेंगे ।"

किसी तरह अपना गुस्सा पीते हुए मैंने कहा – "अपने घर पर तो मैं तुम लोगों को दावत दे नहीं सकता . . . ।"

"अच्छा ! बाहर कहीं ।"

"राहुलगंज चलोगे ? छोटी लाइन से तीन स्टेशन है यहाँ से । बड़ा रमणीक स्थान है । वहाँ के स्टेशन-मास्टर मेरे मित्र हैं । दावत का सारा प्रबंध कर रखेंगे ।"

मेरी यह राय सबको पसंद आई । कल ही वहाँ चलने की पक्की ठहरी । दूसरे दिन शाम को पाँच बजे की गाड़ी से हम रवाना हुए और छः बजते-बजते राहुलगंज पहुँच गए ।

पंडित नेकीराम मेरे साथ इतने आदमियों को देखकर घबराए । उन्हें अलग ले जाकर मैंने उनसे कुछ बातें की । वे हँसकर चुप हो रहे । मैंने पूछा – "आप कल सुबह जा रहे हैं ?"

"कल सुबह नहीं, बल्कि आज ही रात में तीन बजे की गाड़ी से । मेरे रिलीफ आ गए हैं । कल से मेरी छुट्टी शुरू होगी ।"

इधर मुरारी और मोहन में यह बहस हो रही थी कि आसन कहाँ पर जमाया जाए । मुरारी प्लेटफार्म पर ही दरी बिछाकर बैठना चाहता था । मोहन की राय थी कि सामने कुएँ की जगत पर बैठक जमे । पर मैंने जो राय दी वह अपनी नवीनता के कारण सबको फ़ौरन पसंद आ गई ।

स्टेशन की बगल में और रेल की पटरियों से कुछ फासले पर पानी की एक टंकी थी । ज़मीन से करीब चालीस फुट की ऊँचाई पर यह लोहे के खम्भों के ऊपर बैठाई हुई थी । चढ़ने के लिए बगल में लोहे की पतली-सी सीढ़ी लगी थी । टंकी ऊपर से ढकी हुई थी ।

मैंने कहा कि क्यों न इसी टंकी पर चढ़कर बैठा जाए । चाँदनी रात में बड़ा मजा रहेगा । चारों ओर से हवादार जगह, फिर नीचे से पानी की तरी । पास में पेड़ों का झुरमुट होने के कारण कोई देखेगा भी नहीं ।

बस यही ठीक रहा। मेरी सूझ की सबने तारीफ़ की। टंकी पर एक दरी बिछा दी गई और मित्र-मंडली उस पर जा धमकी। कहकहों का बाज़ार गर्म हुआ, गुलछर्रे उड़ने लगे। दो-ढाई घंटा तो देखते-देखते बीत गए। नौ बजे लोगों की राय हुई कि अब खाना आना चाहिए। ऊपर ही खाया जाएगा। मैं प्रबंध करने के लिए नीचे भेजा गया।

पंडित नेकीराम अपने कमरे में स्टेशन पर बैठे हुए थे। मैंने जाकर कहा – "पंडितजी ! अब कोई आदमी दीजिए जो सीढ़ी गिराने में मेरी मदद करे। लेकिन पहले एक घड़ा पानी पीने का ऊपर रखवा दीजिए, गरमी के दिन हैं।"

पंडितजी ने अपना नौकर मेरे साथ किया। नौकर जिस समय घड़े का पानी लेकर टंकी पर चढ़ा उस समय दोस्तों ने समझा कि अब भोजन भी आता होगा। लेकिन नौकर ने उतर कर मेरी मदद से लोहे की सीढ़ी खिसका कर नीचे गिरा दी। मैं नीचे बैठकर तमाशा देखने लगा। करीब आधा घंटा लोगों ने और इंतज़ार किया। फिर यह राय हुई कि कोई नीचे उतर कर देखे कि भोजन पहुँचने में क्यों देर हो रही है। मुरारी नीचे आने के लिए खड़ा हुआ।

पर यह क्या ? सीढ़ी कहाँ गायब हो गई ? मुरारी ने झुककर देखा तो सीढ़ी ज़मीन पर गिरी हुई दिखाई पड़ी।

उस छोटी-सी दुनिया में जो इस समय पानी की टंकी पर स्थित थी एक क्रांति-सी पैदा हो गई। मुझे अभी तक इसका खेद है कि काफ़ी प्रकाश न होने के कारण मैं अपने मित्रों का चेहरा अच्छी तरह नहीं देख पाया था। शोर काफ़ी सुनाई पड़ रहा था।

मैंने नीचे से पूछा – "क्या है मुरारी ! क्यों शोर कर रहे हो ?"

"अजी यहाँ की सीढ़ी कैसे गिर गई ?"

"तुम जानो, मैं क्या जानूँ।"

"बड़ी मुश्किल हुई। हम लोग नीचे कैसे उतरेंगे ?"

"नीचे उतरने की ज़रूरत क्या है ? अब सवेरे नीचे उतरना। बड़े भाग्य से ऐसा उच्च स्थान प्राप्त होता है।"

"फ़जूल मत बको।"

"देखो चाँदनी खिली हुई है। शीतल-मंद-सुगंध बयार बह रही है। ऊपर निर्मल निरभ्र आकाश का वितान है, नीचे हरी-भरी पृथ्वी का प्रसार है।"

"अच्छा चुप रहो।"

"आदर्श ऋतु है, सुंदर स्थान है, मनोरम दृश्य है। इससे अधिक क्या चाहिए ? निश्चिंत होकर प्रकृति का निरीक्षण करो।"

"तुम न मानोगे ?"

"अच्छा कविता करो, या कहानी कहो, रात कट जाएगी। जरा यह तो सोचो कि इस समय तुम लोग स्वर्ग के कितने निकट हो।"

मैंने पंडित नेकीराम के नौकर से कह दिया था। वह एक हाथ में लालटेन और दूसरे में मेरी थाली लिए पहुँचा। मैं वहीं बैठकर खाने लगा। मोहन ने ऊपर से पूछा "अजी हम लोग क्या खाएँगे ?"

मैंने कहा – "इसी अफसोस में मैं आज कुछ ज़्यादा खा रहा हूँ।"

"मर जाव खाते-खाते" – मोहन ने कहा।

"यह कचौरियाँ बड़ी लाजवाब बनी हैं। कहो तो एक टुकड़ा तुम लोगों के देखने के लिए ऊपर फेंकूँ ?"

इसका मुझे कोई उत्तर तो न मिला पर कुछ लोगों के कराहने की आवाज़ मुझे साफ़ सुनाई दी। मैंने फिर कहा – "अजी इस रबड़ी की खुशबू से तो दिल हरा हो गया। तुम लोगों तक इसकी खुशबू पहुँच रही है या नहीं ?"

इस बार भी मुझे कोई उत्तर न मिला। मैंने ऊपर अपनी निगाह उठाई। आपने अँधेरे में किसी बिल्ली की आँखें चमकती हुई देखी हैं ? ठीक उसी तरह की चार जोड़ी आँखें टंकी के ऊपर से मेरी ओर आग फेंक रही थीं। खाना खत्म करके मैं वहाँ से चलने लगा। चलते हुए मैंने कहा – "ऊपर एक घड़ा पीने का पानी मैंने रखवा दिया है। खाली पेट ठंडा जल पीना आयुर्वेद में त्रिदोषनाशक माना गया है।"

थोड़ी दूर जाकर मैं फिर लौटा। एक बात मैं भूल गया था। मैंने कहा -- "हाँ, एक बात और। पंडित नेकीराम ने कहा है कि रात में अगर किसी ने शोर किया तो वे पुलिस को खबर दे देंगे कि कुछ बाहरी लोग बिना इज़ाज़त स्टेशन की टंकी पर चढ़ गए हैं और उधम मचा रहे हैं।"

"तुम्हारा संहार हो" – मुरारी और मोहन ने कहा।

"तुम्हारा सत्यानाश हो" – मुरली और माधो ने कहा।

ग्यारह बज गए थे। स्टेशन पर आकर मैं लेट रहा। राहुलगंज ब्रांच लाइन का एक स्टेशन है। रात में गाड़ियाँ नहीं आती-जाती। स्टेशन पर इसलिए शांति थी।

सुबह साढ़े तीन बजे की गाड़ी से पंडित नेकीराम रवाना हो गए। मैं भी उसी गाड़ी से रवाना हुआ। पंडितजी ने नए स्टेशन मास्टर से जो उनके मित्र थे, चलते समय कह दिया कि उनके कुछ मेहमान पानी की टंकी पर सो रहे हैं, उन्हें सुबह छह बजे की गाड़ी के समय से सीढ़ी लगाकर उतार दीजिएगा।

घर आकर मैं कई दिन तक बाहर नहीं निकला। मुरारी वगैरह आते थे और हाथ मलकर लौट जाते थे।

प्रश्न-अभ्यास

लघूत्तरात्मक प्रश्न

1. मित्रों ने लेखक को दावत के लिए कहाँ बुलाया था ?
2. दावत तक पहुँचने का रास्ता कैसा था ?
3. बाग में मित्रों को न पाकर लेखक की क्या दशा हुई ?
4. लेखक ने मित्रों को दावत पर कहाँ बुलाया ?

5. लेखक ने मित्रों को टंकी पर ठहराने का क्या बहाना किया ?
6. नीचे उतरकर लेखक ने क्या किया ?
7. टंकी के नीचे भोजन करते हुए लेखक ने भोजन की कैसी तारीफ़ की ?
8. ऊपर बैठे हुए असहाय मित्रों की दशा का वर्णन कीजिए।

निबंधात्मक प्रश्न

1. लेखक के मित्र उसे दावत पर बुलाकर हर बार कैसे मूर्ख बनाते थे ?
2. लेखक ने मित्रों को मूर्ख बनाने के लिए क्या योजना बनाई थी ?
3. दावत की अदावत से लेखक का क्या आशय है ?

द्विजेन्द्रनाथ मिश्र 'निर्गुण'

(जन्म 1915 ई. मृत्यु 1993 ई.)

द्विजेन्द्रनाथ मिश्र 'निर्गुण' का जन्म बदायूँ, उत्तरप्रदेश में हुआ। उन्होंने साहित्यरत्न और एम.ए. की उपाधियाँ प्राप्त की। प्रारंभ में निर्गुणजी **माया** और **मनोहर कहानियाँ** के संपादक रहे। बाद में बनारस के श्री सम्पूर्णानंद संस्कृत विश्वविद्यालय में कार्यरत रहे।

निर्गुण जी ने यद्यपि उपन्यास भी लिखे हैं, किंतु उनकी सृजनशक्ति कहानियों में ही पूरी तरह मुखरित हुई है। मानवीय मूल्यों के प्रति समर्पित कथाकार निर्गुण ने अपनी अनुपम शैली में बहुत ही सुन्दर कहानियाँ लिखी हैं। पारंपरिक शैली और बोलचाल की भाषा में लिखी उनकी कहानियाँ बहुत मार्मिक हैं।

प्रमुख रचनाएँ

बहूजी, **दो किनारे**, **कच्चा धागा**, **तीला**, **खोज**, **प्यार के भूखे**, **टूटे सपने**, **जिन्दगी**, **लाजवंती**, **डाक्टर** आदि।

रस-बूँद अमीरी और गरीबी के भेद के कारण टूटते पारिवारिक संबंधों की कहानी है। अमीरी प्रायः मनुष्य को अमानवीय एवं स्वार्थी बना देती है। इस बात को लेखक ने रामचरन के प्रति उसके चाचा और भाई लल्ला के हृदयहीन और निष्ठुर व्यवहार के माध्यम से व्यक्त किया है। एक ओर लल्ला खेल में रामचरन के साथ धोखाधड़ी करता है तो

दूसरी ओर लल्ला का पिता रामचरन की बालकोचित इच्छा के साथ क्रूर मजाक करते हुए उसका हाथ जला देता है । जो व्यक्ति रामचरन के साथ क्रूरतापूर्ण व्यवहार करने में नहीं हिचका वही अपने बेटे लल्ला के तलवों पर मेहँदी लगा रही अपनी पत्नी से कहता है "सँभालकर लगाना कहीं उसकी नींद न टूट जाए ।"

अमीरी की हृदयहीनता के सामने गरीबी की मज़बूरी को व्यक्त करना ही **रस-बूँद** का उद्देश्य है ।

3

रस-बूँद

पछाँही गाँव था। आबादी काफ़ी थी और शहर से सीधा संबंध था। मोटर, लारी, इक्का, ताँगा बीच से होकर गुज़रते थे, पक्की सड़क लगी थी। सब चीज़ें मिलती थीं। आटा-दाल, मसाले, मेवे, कपड़े, बिसातवाले सभी की दुकानें थीं, मिठाई भी बनती थी।

मिठाई की दुकान गंगासहाय की थी। पहले बाप बैठते थे। बड़ा पैसा पैदा किया उन्होंने। पक्का मकान बनवा लिया। बाप मर गए, तब से गंगासहाय दुकान चला रहा है।

वह बाप का अकेला है, उसका बेटा भी अकेला है। बेटा मदरसे में पढ़ता है। उसे सब 'लल्ला' कहते हैं, बहुत लाड़-प्यार है।

लेकिन कुनबा बहुत बड़ा है। कुनबा – यानी चाचा-ताऊ, चचेरे-तयेरे, चाची-ताई, बुआ-जीजी, भतीजे-भतीजी।

उनमें कुछ अमीर हैं, कुछ गरीब हैं। यह अमीरी-गरीबी पास-पास रहने से और भी स्पष्ट हो उठती है। दिन-रात, चौबीसों घंटे सब कोई महसूस करते हैं, अमीर अपनी अमीरी और गरीब अपनी गरीबी। यह अमीरी-गरीबी शाश्वत नहीं है। पहले तो सब एक ही घर के थे, एक-सा

ही खाते-पीते, पहनते थे। एक दिन जो चतुर थे उन्होंने अपना कर्त्तव्य पहचान लिया। वे अमीर हो गए। मूर्ख लोग एकता और समानता को पकड़े रहे। वे अब गरीब हैं। गंगासहाय के दादा मूर्ख न थे, गंगासहाय अमीर है – गंगासहाय का लल्ला भी अमीर है।

मूर्खों में एक थे लेखराज। उनका बेटा फल भुगत रहा है, उनका नाती अभी से गरीब है। उमर उसकी मुश्किल से आठ नौ साल की होगी, लेकिन इससे क्या ? वह गरीब बन गया है।

वह भी अपने बाप का अकेला है, उसकी माँ भी उसको लाड़-प्यार करती है। रामचरन नाम है – 'रामचन्ना' कहकर सब पुकारते है। केवल माँ लल्ला कहती है। उसका मकान पुराने खंडहर के बीच बूढ़े भिखारी की तरह खड़ा है। उसके बाप की दुकान नहीं है। बाप नौकर है, शहर में किसी की दुकान पर।

जाड़ा उतर रहा था। उस दिन मदरसे की छुट्टी थी। लड़के मज़े में इधर-उधर घूम रहे थे। लल्ला के अनेक संगी-साथी हैं। रामचन्ना भी दर्जे में साथ पढ़ता है, भाई लगता है। भाई है तो क्या हुआ – उसका पक्का मकान है, उसके बाप की दुकान है, उसके पास अच्छे कपड़े हैं ? लल्ला उससे दोस्ती नहीं रखता। उसकी अम्मा ने मना कर दिया है, अलग रहा करो इससे। उसे दोस्तों की क्या कमी है। उसकी मीठे की दुकान है। बाप से माँगकर चाहे किसी दिन सबको मीठा बाँट देता है। सब साथी कृतज्ञ हैं।

पास की गली में 'इक्की-दुक्की' खेली जा रही थी। लल्ला सरदार था। सिरके से बासी रोटी खाकर रामचन्ना भी घूमता हुआ आ पहुँचा। खेल दुबारा शुरू हो रहा था। लल्ला से घिघियाकर कहा, "भैया, हमें भी खिला लो।"

वह लल्ला से 'भैया' ही कहता है, अम्मा ने कह दिया है कि नाम कभी मत लेना।

लल्ला ने कहा, "भाग जा कनेटा ! तुझे नहीं खिलाऊँगा।"

खेल शुरू हो गया। रामचन्ना खड़ा देखता रहा।

पर तीन-चार मिनिट पीछे विघ्न पड़ गया। बेईमानी की थी लल्ला ने, विपक्षी लड़का बिगड़ गया। लल्ला ने कहा, "तो मत खेलो।" वह खेल रुक गया।

एक ने सोचकर कहा, "अच्छा, "घोड़ी-घोड़ी" खेला जाए।"

"लेकिन पहले घोड़ी कौन बनेगा ?"

"अरे, रामचन्ना जो है !"

लल्ला ने कहा, "तुम अगर घोड़ी बनो पहले तो तुम्हें खिलाएँगे।"

रामचन्ना ने कहा – "फिर मैं भी चढ़ूँगा।"

लल्ला ने कहा, "हाँ, चढ़ना।"

रामचन्ना घोड़ी बन गया और लड़के बारी-बारी से उसकी पीठ पर बैठकर गेंद उछालने लगे। किसी से भी गलती न हुई। रामचन्ना उसी तरह झुका रहा। सबको पीठ पर चढ़ाता रहा। अंत में लल्ला की बारी आई। वह रामचन्ना की पीठ पर कूदकर बैठा, ठीक जिस तरह कि घोड़ी पर बैठते हैं। रामचन्ना की कमर लचक गई। लल्ला ने उसकी खोपड़ी पर एक धौल जमाई और कहा, "बच्चू, ठीक से रहो।" और गेंद उछाली। गेंद छूट गई। लड़के ताली पीटकर चिल्ला उठे, "चोर-चोर, लल्ला चोर !"

लल्ला पीठ पर से उतर पड़ा। रामचन्ना खुश होकर अपना लाल मुँह लिए सीधे खड़ा हो गया। लल्ला पर सबसे पहले वही सवारी करेगा। कूद-कर बोला, "भैया, अब चलो, मैं चढ़ूँगा।"

तो लल्ला को खयाल आया। फ़ौरन डाँटकर कहा, "भाग जा कनेटा, मैं चढ़ूँगा ! मुँह तो देखो।"

रामचन्ना बड़ा खिन्न हुआ, चेहरा उतर गया। तब से सब को सवारी दे रहा था, उसकी बारी आई तो डपट दिया।

लड़के खूब प्रसन्न हुए, बोले, "खूब सवारी मिली, खूब चढ़े हम तो।"

एक ने कहा, "अच्छा, एक बार और। अच्छा रामचन्ना इस बार बेईमानी नहीं होगी, तू बन तो जा घोड़ी।"

वह रामचन्ना का हाथ पकड़कर उसे झुकाने लगा। रामचन्ना, रुआँसा होकर एक किनारे को हट गया।

लल्ला को बड़ा मज़ा आया। साथियों से कहा, "चलो, सबको पेड़े खिलाएँगे दुकान पर।"

सब लड़के चल दिए। पीछे-पीछे उदास होकर रामचन्ना भी चला।

लल्ला ने दुकान पर चढ़कर बाप से पेड़े माँगे। फिर क्रमशः सब लड़कों को देने लगा। वह खुद मिठाई नहीं खाता। जी भर गया है खाते-खाते।

चुपके से रामचन्ना पीछे जा खड़ा हुआ था। पर उसे पेड़े में हिस्सा नहीं मिला। लल्ला की इच्छा नहीं हुई। रामचन्ना सतृष्ण आँखों से देखता ही रहा। लड़के पेड़ा खाकर चले गए।...

जलेबी बनानी थी। गंगासहाय चीनी की चाशनी पका रहा था। भट्ठी सुलग रही थी और बड़ी-सी लोहे की कड़ाही में दस-बारह सेर चीनी 'बुद्-बुद्' करके फदक रही थी। जब उफान आता तो गंगासहाय दूध का छींटा मार देता और कड़ाही में करछुल घुमाकर लौट-पौट देता।

रामचन्ना को जाने कब से मीठा खाने को नहीं मिला है।

उसी तरह ललचाता खड़ा था और प्यासी आँखों से मिठाइयों की ओर देख रहा था।

गंगासहाय किसी काम से भीतर उठकर गया। कड़ाही के आस-पास रस की बूँदे टपकी थीं, टपककर ज़मीन पर जम गईं थीं। रामचन्ना की नज़र जा पड़ी। बढ़ गया और अँगुली से उठाकर उन बूँदों को चाटने लगा। सब चाट लीं।

गंगासहाय लौट आया। उफान आ रहा था। जल्दी से करछुल से टाला, दो-चार बूँदे फिर गिर गईं आस-पास। रामचन्ना खड़ा था। डरते-डरते गंगासहाय चाचा के सामने ही उसने अँगुली से उठाकर रस की बूँदे चाट लीं। चाचा नहीं बोले। बड़ा खुश हुआ मन में। खड़ा-खड़ा देखता था। कोई बूँद गिरती थी तो फ़ौरन अँगुली से उठाकर चाट लेता था।

अंत में चाशनी तैयार हो गई। गंगासहाय ने दोनों कुंडे कपड़े से पकड़े और कड़ाही उतारकर नीचे धर ली और पीढ़े पर बैठकर उसे घोटने लगा।

रामचन्ना भी इधर आ खड़ा हुआ। शायद कोई बूँद गिरे।

गंगासहाय फिर दुकान के भीतर काम से उठ गया। रामचन्ना ललचा रहा था। चाशनी स्थिर थी, अब बुदबुदे नहीं थे। इस किनारे पर कुछ चीनी लगी थी। वह पककर खस्ता हो गई थी। रामचन्ना ने चुपके से छुटाकर खा ली। फिर उधर से भी छुटाई।

गंगासहाय ने आते-आते देख लिया। कुछ नहीं कहा। रामचन्ना जल्दी से खड़ा हो गया, खड़ा होकर देखने लगा। तीन-चार बूँदे गिरी।

चट से चाट लीं। फिर खड़ा-खड़ा देखने लगा ...

एक ग्राहक आ गया। गंगासहाय उसे सौदा देता रहा। रामचन्ना खड़ा रहा। वह चला गया तो फिर गंगासहाय चाशनी के पास आया। अँगुली से छू-कर देखा, तार बँधता है कि नहीं। तब तक कहीं एक बूँद टपक गई। रामचन्ना झुका और चाट ली।

कोई पास-पड़ोस में न था। अब गंगासहाय ने रामचन्ना की तरफ़ देखा और इशारा किया। पर रामचन्ना को विश्वास न हुआ। क्या कड़ाही में से लेने को कह रहे हैं।

गंगासहाय ने फिर आँख से इशारा किया और हाथ उठाकर बताया कि इस तरह कड़ाही की चाशनी में से रस का चुल्लू भर लो!

रामचन्ना डरता-डरता कड़ाही के पास बैठ गया।

गंगासहाय ने उत्साहित किया, "ले!"

इस तरह चुल्लू भरकर!

तब प्रसन्न होकर रामचन्ना ने हाथ बढ़ाया और आग की तरह जलती चाशनी में, जो देखने में शीतल लगती थी, रामचन्ना ने उत्साहित होकर अपना छोटा-सा हाथ जल्दी से डाल दिया।

चुल्लु-भर रस के लिए!

पर रस नहीं ले सका। उसी क्षण जोर से चीत्कार करके चाशनी में जली अँगुलियाँ छिटकता "अरी अम्मा री–हाय अम्मा !" कहता घर की ओर भाग चला।

गंगासहाय ने धीरे से कहा, "साले !"

फिर वह जलेबी बनाने बैठा।...

माँ अभी तक चक्की पीस रही थी। रामचन्ना जलन से बेकल था। घुसते ही फ़ौरन पानी के घड़े में हाथ घुसेड़ दिया और ज़ोर-ज़ोर से रोने-चिल्लाने लगा। माँ ने सुना तो चक्की पर से दौड़ी आई "क्या हुआ ?"

रामचन्ना ने रोते-रोते कहा, "हाथ जल गया है मेरा।"

"कैसे जल गया ?" – माँ ने घबराकर कहा, "देखूँ तो, कहाँ जला लाया अभागे !" पर रामचन्ना ने नहीं बताया कि किस तरह वह जला।

माँ ने धीरे से बाँह पकड़कर जब हाथ घड़े से बाहर खींचा तो देखकर चिल्ला उठी, "मैया री, हाय-हाय रे।" जाने कैसी कातर दृष्टि हो गई।

रामचन्ना के पूरे हाथ पर फफोले उभर आए थे, पूरा हाथ भरा था।

करुण स्वर से पुकारकर कहा, "चाची, ओ चाची !"

सामने के घर में एक औरत आ बसी थी। पुकार सुनकर वह दौड़ी आई। माँ ने रोकर कहा, "देखो तो, जाने कहाँ पूरा हाथ जला लाया है। हाय, क्या करूँ ? क्या लगाऊँ ? आग पड़ी होगी।"

औरत ने देखकर कहा, "भुन गया है बिलकुल। भला आग न पड़ी होगी !"

रामचन्ना रो रहा था। माँ ने गोदी में बैठा लिया, चुप कराने लगी और कातर वाणी से पूछने लगी, "क्या लगाऊँ चाची ? किसी तरह ठंड पड़ जाए।"

औरत ने कहा, "घबराओ मत, मै अभी चली जाती हूँ, मुराब की बारी में केला है, केले का पानी लगाओ, ठीक हो जाएगा।" ...

केले का पानी लगाया, और भी अनेक उपचार किए, पर जलन बन्द न हुई। उस दिन रोटी नहीं बनी। रामचन्ना को बुखार चढ़ आया। उसे दूध पिला दिया। माँ स्वयं निराहार रही ...

रात को जब उसका फूला हाथ देखकर माँ रोने लगी तो रामचन्ना ने रोते-रोते सब घटना सुनाई।

"हाय निरदई।"

माँ ने उसे कलेजे से लगा लिया। अरे, कौन उसके बालक को पकड़कर जबरदस्ती हाथ जलाने को लिए जा रहा है ? गरीब को इतना मत सताओ ! अरे, उसके पास बदला लेने की शक्ति नहीं है, किसी से फ़रियाद नहीं करेगा। दया करो। उसके भी जान है, माया-ममता है।

"हाय हत्यारे !"...

रात को दुकान बढ़ाकर जब गंगासहाय घर पहुँचा तो पत्नी को 'लल्ला' की खाट के पास बैठा पाया। पूछा, "क्या कर रही हो ?"

"मेहँदी लगा रही हूँ तलवों पर।"

गंगासहाय ने अपनी खाट पर लेटकर कहा, "सँभालकर लगाना कहीं उसकी नींद न टूट जाए।"...

... दूर, दूसरे मुहल्ले में अधटूटी खटिया पर लेटा रामचन्ना कराहकर क़रवट बदलकर बोला, "अम्मा !"

"बेटा... !"

"नींद नहीं आती। बड़ी आग पड़ी है।"

"हाय पुतुआ, मैं क्या करूँ ? कैसे तेरा दुख अपने ऊपर ले लूँ ?"

दर्द से रामचन्ना फिर रोने लगा। उसे कलेजे से लगाकर माँ भी रो उठी। बाकी सब गाँव सो रहा था।

प्रश्न-अभ्यास

लघूत्तरात्मक प्रश्न

1. लड़कों ने रामचन्ना को पहले घोड़ी बनने के लिए क्यों कहा ?
2. पेड़े में हिस्सा नहीं मिलने से रामचन्ना की क्या मनोदशा हुई ?
3. रामचन्ना मिठाइयों की ओर कैसे देख रहा था ?
4. गंगासहाय ने रामचन्ना की ओर देखकर क्या इशारा किया ?
5. रामचन्ना ने अपना नन्हा-सा हाथ कड़ाही में क्यों डाला ?
6. रामचन्ना कड़ाही में से रस क्यों नहीं ले सका ?

निबंधात्मक प्रश्न

1. रामचन्ना से दोस्ती रखने के लिए लल्ला की माँ ने उसे क्यों मना किया ।
2. लल्ला के व्यवहार से उसकी किस प्रवृत्ति का परिचय मिलता है ।
3. इस कहानी में लेखक ने समाज के किस वर्ग पर व्यंग्य किया है ।
4. "किसी से फ़रियाद नहीं करेगा" का आशय स्पष्ट कीजिए ।

बाल शौरि रेड्डी

(जन्म 1928 ई.)

बाल शौरि रेड्डी का जन्म ग्राम मोल्लल गुडर, जिला कण्ण, आंध्र प्रदेश में हुआ। उन्होंने मैट्रिक तक की शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के बाद हिन्दी साहित्य सम्मेलन, प्रयाग द्वारा आयोजित साहित्यरत्न और देवधर द्वारा आयोजित साहित्यालंकार की परीक्षाएँ स्वतंत्र रूप से उत्तीर्ण कीं। उन्होंने दक्षिण भारत हिन्दी प्रचार सभा, मद्रास में लेखन एवं संपादन कार्य किया। वे काफी दिनों तक बाल मासिक पत्रिका **चंदामामा** के संपादक रहे। **चंदामामा** से अवकाश प्राप्त करने के बाद भारतीय भाषा परिषद्, कलकत्ता में निदेशक नियुक्त हुए। अब स्वतंत्र लेखन करते हैं।

बाल शौरि रेड्डी मूलतः तेलुगुभाषी हैं। उन्होंने हिन्दी में लेखन को अपना कार्यक्षेत्र बनाया। उनकी अब तक पचास से भी अधिक रचनाएँ प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं और उनमें से कई पुरस्कृत भी हुई। मौलिक लेखन के अलावा उन्होंने तेलुगु की कुछ रचनाओं का हिन्दी में और हिन्दी की रचनाओं का तेलुगु में अनुवाद किया है।

प्रमुख रचनाएँ

बाल शौरि रेड्डी ने उपन्यास, कहानी और एकांकी के साथ-साथ आलोचना साहित्य भी लिखा है। उनकी प्रमुख कथा साहित्य संबंधी रचनाएँ हैं :

ज़िन्दगी की राह, **शबरी**, **धरती मेरी माँ** आदि उपन्यास तथा **न्याय की कहानियाँ**, **आंध्र की लोककथाएँ**, **दक्षिण की लोककथाएँ** आदि कहानी संग्रह ।

बाल शौरि रेड्डी की भाषा सरल और प्रवाहपूर्ण है । वे अपनी बात पूरी सरलता से कह जाते हैं ।

चाँदी का जूता कहानी का कथ्य भारतीय समाज का कलंक और भारतीय नारी के लिए अभिशाप रूपी दहेज-प्रथा से संबंध रखता है । लेखक के अनुसार नारी जाति की शोषक स्वयं नारी है । वह अपने आदर्शवादी पति को भी दहेज लेने के लिए बाध्य करती है । इस कहानी में लड़की के पिता ने अपने समधी को रुपयों के साथ चाँदी का जूता भेज कर उसको करारी चोट पहुँचाई है । लेखक के मित्र को इस बात का बहुत मलाल है । इस कहानी में कामकाजी महिलाओं के शोषण का भी वर्णन है ।

4

चाँदी का जूता

संयोग की बात थी, मैं जिस दिन अपने वकील मित्र शिवराम के घर पहुँचा, उसी दिन मेरे मित्र के पुत्र की वर्षगाँठ धूमधाम से मनाई जा रही थी। भोज में निमंत्रित व्यक्तियों में वेंकटेश्वर राव को देखकर मेरी बाँछें खिल गईं। उसी समय देखता क्या हूँ, एकदम उछलकर वह मुझसे गले मिले। कुशल-प्रश्नों की बौछार कर दी।

दूसरे दिन प्रातः मित्र का न्योता पाकर नाश्ता करने उसके घर पहुँचा। सर्वप्रथम विलायती व कीमती अलसेशियन सोनी ने हमारा स्वागत इस तरह किया, मानो वह यह जानती हो कि मैं उसके मालिक का अभिन्न मित्र हूँ।

बाथरूम से सर पोंछते हुए वेंकटेश्वर राव सीधे बैठक में आ पहुँचा, पंखा लगाया। अखबार हाथ में थमाकर कपड़े पहनने के लिए शयनकक्ष में चला गया। बैठक इस तरह सजाई गई थी, मानो फ़िल्मी शूटिंग करने के लिए अभी-अभी तैयार किया गया सेट हो। मैं मन-ही-मन अपने मित्र की पत्नी की अलंकार-प्रियता का अभिनंदन करने लगा, साथ ही उससे अपनी घरवाली की तुलना करने लगा। दीवारों पर सुप्रसिद्ध कलाकारों की पेंटिंगें

सुशोभित थीं। सारी बैठक एकदम साफ़-सुथरी और मनमोहक थी। मैं सोचने लगा कि हॉस्टल में रहते वेंकटेश्वर राव कैसा लापरवाह रहा करता था, आज उसकी रुचि में ऐसा भारी परिवर्तन क्योंकर हुआ ! वह सदा अपनी चीज़ें अस्त-व्यस्त रख छोड़ता था। उन्हें करीने से सजाने की उसकी आदत ही न थी। मैं चिढ़कर उसे लाख समझा देता, किंतु उसकी लापरवाही में कोई परिवर्तन न देख हार मान चुका था। कभी-कभी कहा करता था, "यार, तुम्हारी घरवाली ही शायद तुम्हें बदल सकेगी।" अचानक मुझे स्मरण आया, वेंकटेश्वर राव में तो कोई परिवर्तन न हुआ होगा, उसकी श्रीमती रमा की कला होगी। वाह, रमा तो सौंदर्य की आराधिका होगी।

"भाई साहब, नमस्ते ! शायद आप रास्ता भूल गए हैं, जो हमारे घर आए !" रमा एक साँस में कह गई।

मैंने ब्लिट्ज़ को तिपाई पर रखते हुए दृष्टि उठाई तो देखता क्या हूँ, सामने हाथ जोड़े हँसमुख रमा खड़ी है।

मैंने उठकर अभिवादन का प्रत्युत्तर दिया। तभी रमा पूछ बैठी, "आप सुरेश की शादी में क्यों नहीं आए ? हमने तो आपका बहुत इंतज़ार किया।"

– क्या सुरेश की शादी हो गई ? मुझे न्योता कहाँ मिला, जो चला आता। निमंत्रणपत्र तो भेजा नहीं, उलटे मुझ पर दोषारोपण कर रही हो ! वाह, उलटा चोर कोतवाल को डाँटे !

- आप क्या कह रहे हैं ? हमने पहली किश्त में ही आपके नाम पोस्ट कर दिया था।

– हो सकता है, रमा जी, पर मुझे मिलता, तब न मैं आता ! सच कह रहा हूँ, मेरे नाम कोई निमंत्रण नहीं आया। मैंने अपनी तरफ़ से पूरी सफ़ाई देने की कोशिश की।

शायद रमा के तर्क के सामने मैं हार बैठता, तभी वेंकटेश्वर राव ने प्रवेश करके मेरी रक्षा की।

रमा नाश्ते का प्रबंध करने भीतर चली गई। थोड़ी देर बाद भीतर से बुलावा आया। भोजनालय में गुड़िया-जैसी सुंदर कन्या तश्तरियों में मिठाइयाँ सजा रही थी। वेंकटेश्वर राव ने

अपनी बहू का परिचय कराया, "यह सीमा......... मेरी पुत्र-वधू !" जांनते हो, इसने एम. ए. प्रथम श्रेणी में किया है। विश्वविद्यालय-भर में यह प्रथम आई। इसे स्वर्णपदक भी प्राप्त हुआ है। फिर राव ने अपनी पुत्र-वधू से कहा, "बेटी, चाचा को जरा वह पदक तो दिखलाओ।"

सीमा को शायद पदक दिखाना पसंद न था। पर सर झुकाए चाय के प्याले मेज़ पर लगा रही थी। रमा दौड़कर बैठक में गई। अलमारी से पदक लाकर उसने मेरे हाथ में थमा दिया।

– भैया, हमारी बिरादरी में आज तक किसी ने स्वर्णपदक प्राप्त नहीं किया। हमारी सीमा पर हमें गर्व है। यह तो रात-दिन पढ़ती है। पी. एच. डी. भी कर रही है। कहती है कि मैं डी. लिट्. भी करूँगी। मुझे डर है कि रात-दिन जागने पर बहू की तबीयत कहीं बिगड़ न जाए। मैं लाख समझाती हूँ कि बहू, तुम आराम करो, लेकिन हमारी बात सुनती ही नहीं। रसोई बनाती है, खाना परोसती है, ससुर की सेवा करती है, साथ ही कॉलेज में पढ़ाती भी है।

– भाभी, तब कोई रसोइया क्यों नहीं रख लेतीं ? कमाने वाली बहू से काम लेना तो ठीक नहीं है। लोग क्या सोचेंगे ?

– मैं भी यही सोचती हूँ, लेकिन मुझे अपने हाथ का खाना ही अच्छा लगता है। काम भी क्या है ! चार जने हैं। आखिर हमारा भी तो समय कटना चाहिए। काम करने से तबीयत भी अच्छी रहती है।

– रमा, झूठ बोलने की भी हद होती है ! ये पराये थोड़े ही हैं। यार, असली बात यह है कि रमा रसोइए के पीछे खर्च करना बेकार मानती है। मैंने एक-दो नौकर रखे भी, पर कोई-न-कोई बहाना बनाकर इसने भगा दिया।

– तुम सारा दोष मुझ पर मढ़ते हो। तुम्हीं ने तो एक दिन नौकर को किसी काम का नहीं बताया इसलिए मैंने हटा दिया, वरना मेरा क्या जाता है। कमानेवाले तुम हो और खर्चने वाले भी तुम्हीं हो। मैं आराम से बैठ जाती। मुझे क्या पड़ा है, हाथ जलाने को ! रमा खीज उठी।

मैंने बीच-बचाव के खयाल से समझाया, "अपना काम खुद करने में बुरा क्या है। भाभी का समय भी कटेगा और तुम लोगों को बढ़िया खाना भी मिलेगा। जब वह स्वयं खाना बनाने को तैयार हैं, तो तुम रोकने की क्यों सोचते हो ?"

– अगर वह खुद बना ले तो मुझे कोई आपत्ति नहीं है, मगर बेचारी बहू से सारा दिन काम लेती है। उसे पढ़ने की फ़ुरसत नहीं मिलती। जब वह छह सौ रुपए मासिक कमा कर लाती है तो उसमें से एक सौ रुपए रसोइए के पीछे खर्च करने में क्या हर्ज है। अगर अशिक्षित बहू घर आती तो क्या होता ? मेरे भाई के घर के हालात जानते हो ? पचास हज़ार रुपए दहेज लेकर मैट्रिक पास बहू को घर लाए। वह रानी की तरह बैठी रहती है। परोसने तक का काम नहीं करती ! कोई उसे छोटा-मोटा काम बता दे तो कहती है "मेरे पिताजी ने इसलिए पचास हज़ार रुपए नहीं दिए हैं कि मैं आपके घर बेगारी करूँ वे रुपए बैंक में जमा कर दो। जो ब्याज मिले, उससे नौकर-चाकर रख लो।" आखिर मेरी बहू तो ऐसी नहीं। बेचारी अपना एक भी मिनट आराम करने में नहीं बिताती। समझो कि यह हमारी खुशकिस्मती थी कि ऐसी बहू हमें मिली।

– पति को बहू की तारीफ़ के पुल बाँधते देख रमा से रहा नहीं गया। वह तनकर बोली, "हम ही चाकरी करने के लिए पैदा हो गई हैं न ! मेरे बाप-दादे ज़मींदार थे। हमारे मायके में नौकर-चाकर, गाड़ी-वाड़ी सब कुछ थी। लेकिन मैं यहाँ क्या भोग रही हूँ।"

बात बढ़ते देख मैं वेंकटेश्वर राव के साथ उठकर बैठक में आ गया। वेंकटेश्वर राव ने सिगरेट का केस आगे बढ़ाते हुए कहा, "यार, मैं जानता हूँ, तुमने सिगरेट पीना छोड़ दिया। पर मेरी कसम, तुम एक सिगरेट तो पी लो। ना मत कहो, वरना मुझे दुख होगा।"

मैं उस हालत में राव को अप्रसन्न नहीं करना चाहता था। सिगरेट जलाकर कश लेते हुए सोचने लगा, नाहक राव के घर में क्यों तनाव आ गया !

राव ने ऐश ट्रे लाकर तिपाई पर रखा। मेरी उत्सुकता जगी। वह चाँदी का बना था। उलटे जूते की आकृति का था। इस किस्म का ऐश ट्रे मैंने पहली ही बार देखा था। पूछा, "यार, तुमने इसे कहाँ से खरीदा ?"

राव दार्शनिक की भाँति गंभीर हो गया। फीकी मुसकान उसके चेहरे पर खिल उठी।

– दोस्त, मैं तुमसे क्यों छिपाऊँ ? यह ऐश ट्रे मेरे थोथे आदर्शों का उपहास करनेवाला अविस्मरणीय चिह्न है। तुम जानते हो, हमने कॉलेज में पढ़ते समय शपथ ली थी कि हम भूलकर भी दहेज न लेंगे। यह भी जानते हो हमने अपने विवाह के समय इसका पालन भी किया। पर क्या बताऊँ, जब मेरे पुत्र सुरेश के विवाह का प्रश्न उठा, तब मैंने बिना दहेज के एक मित्र की कन्या का रिश्ता पक्का किया। मेरी श्रीमती को वह रिश्ता पसंद नहीं आया। कई अच्छे परिवारों की लड़कियों के पिताओं ने मेरे घर की अनेक बार परिक्रमाएँ कीं, किंतु देवी रमा उन भक्तों की दक्षिणा पर प्रसन्न नहीं हुई। आखिर मैंने यह रिश्ता तय किया। रमा ने सीमा को देखा। पसंद भी किया। रिश्ता पक्का भी हो गया। निमंत्रणपत्र भी छपे।

विवाह के केवल पंद्रह दिन रह गए थे। रमा सोच रही थी कि सीमा के पिता सिविल सप्लाई अफसर हैं, उसने दोनों हाथों खूब कमाया होगा। बिना माँगे हज़ारों की दक्षिणा मिल जाएगी। आखिर न मालूम कैसे उसके कानों में यह भनक पड़ी कि सीमा के पिता बड़े ही भद्र पुरुष हैं। प्रतिष्ठित भी हैं, पर ईमानदार हैं। उन्होंने कभी रिश्वत नहीं ली है, इसलिए यह विवाह ठाठ से तो करेंगे, किंतु दहेज में एक भी पैसा न देंगे। जब सुंदर, सुशील एवं योग्य कन्या को हम 'कन्यादान' की रस्म अदा कर सौंपते हैं, तो दक्षिणा क्यों चुकाएँ।

मैंने भी कभी सीमा के पिता से दहेज की माँग नहीं की थी। रमा मुझ पर दबाव डालने लगी कि मैं सीमा के पिता से दहेज की रकम की बात पक्की कर लूँ।

आखिर मैं विवश हो गया। झिझकते हुए मैंने सीमा के पिता के कानों में यह बात डाल दी। मैंने सिर्फ़ इतना ही कहा, 'भाई साहब, कई लोग लाख दो लाख रुपयों के दहेज का लोभ दिखाते मेरे घर आए, लेकिन मैंने उन सभी रिश्तों को ठुकरा दिया। मैं सिर्फ़ लड़की को योग्य, सुशील और सुंदर देखना चाहता था। मेरी श्रीमती कुछ और सोचती

हैं । मैं यही कहूँगा कि हम दोनों परिवारों की प्रतिष्ठा को ध्यान में रखते हुए उचित रकम अवश्य दें ।'

ये शब्द कहकर मैं घर लौट आया । वह भले मानुस थे, मुझ पर नाराज भी नहीं हुए । लेकिन मैंने घर लौटकर रमा को सूचना दी कि अच्छी खासी रकम दहेज में मिल जाएगी, तुम फ़िक्र मत करो । विवाह के दिन तक रोज़ वह मुझे तंग करती रही कि तुमने यह क्यों नहीं कहा कि पचास हज़ार रुपयों का दहेज मिलने पर ही हम आपकी कन्या को ब्याहेंगे ।

मैंने एक सप्ताह बाद सुना कि सीमा के पिता ने राइस मिलर्स ऐसोसिएशन के सदस्यों को अपने घर बुलाया था । राइस मिलर्स ऐसोसिएशन ने कन्या को एक बहुत बड़ा चाँदी का बरतन भेंट किया । वही बरतन हमें दहेज में प्राप्त हुआ । मेरी श्रीमती ने विवाह संपन्न होते ही वह बरतन लेकर कमरे में सुरक्षित रख दिया । मुझे अलग से बुलाकर बरतन का ढक्कन खोल दिया । उसकी आँखे विस्मय से चमक उठीं । नोटों के बंडलों से वह बरतन भरा हुआ था ।

रमा ने सारे बंडल ज़मीन पर उड़ेल दिए । उसमें कुल मिलाकर साठ हज़ार एक सौ सोलह रुपए थे । रमा, सीमा के पिता की उदारता की प्रशंसा करती रही । वे सभी नोट एकदम नए थे । मुझे तो डर लगा कि कहीं ये जाली नोट तो नहीं ।

रमा रुपयों के बंडल एक बक्स में सजाने लगी । मैंने बरतन में हाथ डाला, तो कोई चीज हाथ लगी – वह चाँदी का जूता था । मेरे समधी ने वह जूता मेरे सिर पर नहीं, दिल पर मारा था ।

प्रश्न-अभ्यास

लघूत्तरात्मक प्रश्न

1. लेखक को वेंकटेश्वर राव के घर की बैठक को देखकर कैसा लगा ?
2. सीमा की उच्च शिक्षा के बारे में ससुर की क्या राय थी ?

3. वेंकटेश्वर राव के अनुसार बहू में किस प्रकार के गुण होने चाहिए ?
4. शादी में 'राइस मिलर्स ऐसोसिएशन' की ओर से सीमा को क्या भेंट मिली ?
5. बरतन का ढक्कन खोलने पर रमा की आँखें विस्मय से क्यों चमक उठीं ?
6. 'मेरे समधी ने वह जूता मेरे सिर पर नहीं दिल पर मारा था' वेंकटेश्वर राव के इस कथन का आशय क्या है ?
7. लेखक को स्वर्णपदक दिखाने के पीछे रमा की मनोवृत्ति क्या थी ?
8. बेटे की शादी के बारे में सोचते समय वेंकटेश्वर और रमा के चरित्र में क्या अंतर दिखाई पड़ता है ?

निबंधात्मक प्रश्न

1. रमा अपने घर में रसोइया क्यों नहीं रखती ?
2. सीमा के पिता के चरित्र की क्या-क्या विशेषताएँ हैं ?
3. 'चाँदी का जूता' शीर्षक के औचित्य पर प्रकाश डालिए ।
4. दहेज समाज का कलंक है । इस विषय पर पाँच वाक्य लिखिए ।

मेहरून्निसा परवेज़

(जन्म 1944 ई.)

मेहरून्निसा परवेज़ का जन्म मध्य प्रदेश के बालाघाट के बहेला ग्राम में हुआ । उन्होंने बी. ए. तक शिक्षा प्राप्त की और उसके बाद लेखन-कार्य में लग गईं ।

प्रारंभ से ही उनमें कहानी लिखने का शौक था । पहली रचना **पाँचवी कब्र** अक्तूबर 1963 की **नई कहानियाँ** पत्रिका में प्रकाशित हुई, जिसका अनुवाद पाँच भाषाओं में हुआ । इस प्रथम रचना से ही उन्होंने प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त कर ली । तब से लगातार कहानियाँ लिखती रही हैं जो विविध भाषाओं की पत्र-पत्रिकाओं में प्रकाशित होती रही हैं । उनका उपन्यास **उसका घर** मलयालम में भी अनूदित होकर प्रकाशित हो चुका है ।

उनकी सामाजिक कार्यों में भी गहरी रुचि है और वे अनेक साहित्यिक एवं सामाजिक संस्थाओं से संबंध हैं ।

प्रमुख रचनाएँ

उपन्यास – **आँखों की दहलीज़, उसका घर, कोरजा, अकेला पलाश ।**

कहानी-संग्रह – **आदम और हव्वा, टहनियों पर धूप, गलत पुरुष, फाल्गुनी, अंतिम पढ़ाई, सोने का बसर, अयोध्या से वापसी, एक और सैलाब, कोई नहीं, कानी बाट, ढहता कुतुब मीनार, रिश्ते और अम्मा ।**

छोटे मन की कच्ची धूप कहानी में उमा के संघर्षपूर्ण एवं साहसी जीवन की घटनाओं को उभारने का प्रयास कहानी लेखिका ने किया है। उमा का पति एक दिन हवाई जहाज़ की दुर्घटना में मर जाता है। तब उमा अपने बच्चों को लेकर किस प्रकार जीवन निर्वाह करती है, यही इस कहानी का मुख्य विषय है। साथ ही अबोध बच्चों का मनोवैज्ञानिक चित्रण भी सशक्त रूप से कहानी में किया गया है।

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छोटे मन की कच्ची धूप

सामने सड़क पार कर भूरी बिल्ली पीली कोठी की दीवार पर चढ़ गई। जाती हुई बिल्ली की परछाईं धरती पर पड़ रही थी, जहाँ एक कुत्ता बैठा ध्यान से उस परछाईं को देख रहा था।

निस्तब्धता खुद बौराई-सी लग रही थी। उमा ने अपने शरीर को शाल से अलग किया। दोनों बच्चे अब भी सो रहे थे। वह रास्ता देख रही थी मेरी का, जो अक्सर सात बजकर पैंतीस मिनट तक आ जाती है। कहीं आज फिर उसका शराबी पति घर तो नहीं आया ? उसका पति जब घर आता है तो मेरी काम पर नहीं आती। खाना खाकर दोनों मैटिनी शो देखने जाते हैं।

उमा ने पैर नीचे कर स्लीपर पहन लिए। खिड़की से बाहर देखते हुए उसने सोचा – कहीं आज वह नहीं आई तो आज फिर उसे सारे काम निपटाने होंगे।

फ़ार्म का आदमी अब तक अंडे देने नहीं आया। हो सकता है दूसरों के घर बाँटते-बाँटते आज वह लेट हो गया हो।

उसने जाली का पिंजरा खोलकर अन्दर झाँका। अंडे का पैकेट खाली पड़ा था। बस, एक तरफ़ बासी डबलरोटी का आधा टुकड़ा और मक्खन की एक टिकिया ही पड़ी थी।

ओह ! तो उसे बेकरी भी जाना होगा ? सोचते ही उसे मेरी पर गुस्सा आया। क्या वह उसकी मजबूरियों को नहीं समझती। टिंकू को आठ पैंतालीस पर स्कूल जाने को तैयार करना होगा। गाड़ी आती ही होगी।

उसने घड़ी देखी। समय आगे खिसक रहा था। जीवन की यह अनियमितता उसे खलने लगी। पति के जीवन में तो ऐसा नहीं होता था। उस समय हर काम कितना समय पर हो जाता था। उसे इतना भटकना भी नहीं पड़ता था।

पति की याद आते ही उसकी सूनी आँखों में चुभन होने लगी। कैसे पल भर में सब कुछ समेट कर मौत पीछे के रास्ते से चुपचाप निकल गई और वह कुछ भी न कर पाई। केवल ठगी-सी खड़ी रह गई। करती भी क्या ? वह खुद पति को हवाई जहाज़ में बैठा कर आई थी। शायद मौत के पीछे दौड़ती-रोती-चिल्लाती। सावित्री कैसे सत्यवान को मौत के हाथ से निकाल लाई थी ? पर वह तो पति के मरने के दिन को जानती थी, उसने दीवार पर निशान लगा रखे थे। पर उमा को तो कुछ मालूम नहीं था। वह तो खुद पति को मौत के हाथों सौंप कर हाथ झाड़कर छटपटा रही थी। अभी वह वापस घर आने की सोच रही थी कि एक भारी हलचल ने उसे कँपा दिया। जोर-जोर से ऐलान हो रहा था कि अभी जो जहाज़ उड़ा है वह मुश्किल से पंद्रह-बीस मील दूर जाकर ही टकरा गया था और वह बहुत ही टूटे मन से आगे के समाचार जानने के लिए कुछ भयभीत-सी कुछ उत्सुक-सी घर लौट आई थी।

सब कैसे कितनी जल्दी हो गया ! और उस पर आ पड़ी थी दो बच्चों की जिम्मेदारी। बड़े शहरों का अपना जीवन और उस भीड़ को अकेली नापती वह खुद !

कालबेल बजने लगी। वह दरवाज़े की ओर बढ़ी। फार्म का लड़का सफ़ेद ड्रेस में खड़ा था।

'मेम साहब, अंडे।'

अंडे लेते हुए उसका मन काफ़ी हल्का लग रहा था। शायद इसलिए कि अब उसे बेकरी जाना या फोन करना नहीं पड़ेगा।

दरवाज़ा बिना लगाए ही वह अंडे लिए अंदर आ गई। हीटर का प्लग लगाकर उसने अंडे उबलने रख दिए। वापस दरवाज़ा बंद करने आई तो भूरी बिल्ली पायरी पर लेटी सुबह की धूप सेंक रही थी।

उमा मुसकराई और उसने बासी बची डबल रोटी का टुकड़ा लाकर उसके सामने डाल दिया। उसने लपक कर टुकड़े को उठाया और अहाते की दीवार फाँद गई। दूर से जाती बिल्ली ऐसी लग रही थी, मानो मुँह में चूहा दबाए जा रही हो।

लाल छत वाले घर में पेपर वाला घंटी बजा रहा था। दोनों बच्चे जाग रहे थे और देगची में उबलते अंडों को इधर से उधर नाचते देख रहे थे।

"मामा, हीटर बंद कर दें ?" टिंकू ने पूछा।

"हाँ, बेटा, समय तो काफ़ी हो गया है।" उसने दोनों खिड़कियों पर सटी चिक को लपेट कर ऊपर बाँध दिया। कमरे में ढेर सा उजाला फैल गया। खिड़की के सामने से दूध वाले साइकिलों पर तेज़ी से घंटी बजाते जा रहे थे।

उसने निक्कू को उठाकर ज़मीन पर खड़ा कर दिया। बच्चों के फ्रेश होने तक वह टेबल पर नाश्ता लगाने लगी। पहले यही सुबह कितनी जल्दी की होती थी। जल्दी से उसे ब्रेकफास्ट तैयार करना होता था। पर अब तो समय उसके पास बचा है। भागती हुई जिंदगी मानो सहसा जड़ हो गई है।

स्कूल की बस सामने सड़क पर खड़ी थी। टिंकू जाते समय उसके पास आया, "मामा, मेरे स्कूल जाते में अगर डैडी आ जाएँ तो फोन कर देना।"

"हाँ बेटा, जल्दी से फोन कर दूँगी।"

रोज़ का यही सवाल और टिंकू सड़क की ओर दौड़ रहा था। वह खिड़की से खड़ी उसे देखती रही। पायरी पर अब भी निक्कू खड़ा, जाते हुए भाई को देख रहा था।

बस जाने पर भी दोनों वहीं खड़े रहे । उमा को फिर वही सवाल परेशान कर रहे थे । दोनों बच्चों के छोटे-छोटे मन में कैसे डैडी के मरने की बड़ी खबर को भरे ? उन्हें कैसे बताए, डैडी कलकत्ता से अब नहीं लौटेंगे । उनके मँगाए उपहार अब डैडी नहीं ला सकेंगे । उसके लिए सबसे बड़ी समस्या आज भी बच्चों को समझाना था और अब तक वह यही नहीं कर पाई थी ।

आज भी उमा के लिए समस्या है । उमा ने कभी सोचा भी नहीं था कि इतने छोटे-छोटे मन की समस्या इतनी विकट होगी । उसे याद आया अमरीका के प्रेसीडेण्ट कैनेडी की पत्नी श्रीमती जेकेलिन कैनेडी ने अपने पति के मरने का समाचार बच्चों को सबसे पहले समझाया था और इतनी अच्छी तरह से उनके मन को बाँध दिया था कि बच्चे खुद बड़े ढंग से अपनी आया को समझा रहे थे – "तुम्हें मालूम है । मामा ने बताया, डैडी को एक बहुत बुरे आदमी ने गोली से मार दिया।"

कितने छोटे-से वाक्य में बच्चे अपने मन को सँभाल गए थे । पर वह ऐसा साहस नहीं जुटा पाती । जब वह बच्चों को समझाने के लिए पास बैठती है तो पहले वह खुद रोने लगती है । वह अपने मन को जितना बाँधती है, उतना ही वह बिखरता है और इस बिखरने और समेटने में ही उसके हाथ से वह क्षण भी खो जाता है जिसे वह कई दिनों के प्रत्यनों के बाद तैयार करती है ।

निक्कू फर्श पर अकेला बैठा नीचे गिरी माचिस की तीलियों को वापस माचिस में रख रहा था ।

टार्च के खाली सैल अलमारी के एक बड़े हिस्से को घेरे हैं । आजकल टार्च का सैल कितनी जल्दी खराब हो जाता है । सड़क का बढता शोर घर की दीवारों से टकराने लगा । उमा ने खिड़की से झाँका, सब्ज़ी वाला ठेले में ढेर सारी सब्ज़ियाँ रखे जा रहा था । उसने उसे पुकारा । निक्कू को उसने गोद में उठा लिया ।

"बेटा, मामा खाने में क्या बनाएगी ?"

"गोभी-मटर"

वह हँस दी। सहसा उसे इन सुबहों के पीछे वाली सुबह की याद आ गई जब वह ऐसे ही बच्चों से पूछती तो चट से उसके पति कहते – "गोभी-मटर"। उसने उदासी से भर कर सब्जी वाले को गोभी-मटर दे जाने को कहा। सब्ज़ी वाला तोलकर सब्ज़ियाँ दरवाजे के पास डाली में रख गया। निक्कू डाली उठा लाया – "मामा, सब्ज़ी।"

निक्कू सो गया था। उमा टिंकू का इन्तज़ार कर रही थी। कुकर उसने खोला नहीं था। खुले हुए बाल पीठ को घेरे हुए थे। उसने डायरी उठा ली। वह रोज़ इसी समय डायरी लिखती है। उसे याद है डायरी लिखने की आदत उसको एक मिस ने डाली थी। वह अंग्रेज़ महिला बहुत भावुक थी। हर लड़की को डायरी लिखने को कहती। उसके चले जाने के बहुत बाद उमा को किसी ने बताया था – मिस जिस युवक से प्रेम करती थी, वह लड़ाई में मारा गया था।

डायरी के पन्ने उलटते हुए एक पृष्ठ पर उसकी दृष्टि रुक गई, जिसके एक पूरे पेज पर सिर्फ एक लाईन लिखी थी – "किसका शाप मुझे खा गया।"

वह देर तक इन शब्दों को सहलाती रही – बहुत उदास-सी और एकटक शेल्फ में रखी किताबों को देखती रही। मनीप्लांट की बेल दीवार के आधे भाग को घेरे थी। उसे किसी पुस्तक में पढ़ा वाक्य याद आया, "लोग बड़प्पन का दिखावा करने के लिए मनीप्लांट लगाते हैं।"

उमा को इस टाइम मेरी के आने की उम्मीद थी, क्योंकि वह अक्सर बारह बजे वाला शो देखकर तीन बजे ड्यूटी पर लौट आती थी। मेरी रोज़ की तरह आज भी बहुत खुश रहेगी। उसके मना करने पर बच्चों को चॉकलेट का पैकेट देगी। मेरी यह बच्चों के प्रति ममता दिखाने को करती है या पड़ने वाली डाँट की सिफ़ारिश में यह होता है, वह आज तक समझ नहीं पाई। मेरी शायद दोनों अलग-अलग समय को एक में जोड़ देती है, या घटा देती है। एक में से एक गया शून्य बचा और एक में एक जुड़ा, दो हुआ। घाटा तो शायद कहीं नहीं आया।

उसने रात की आधी जली मोमबत्ती को उठाकर देखा, अभी और काम दे सकती है। उसने बाद में किन्हीं क्षणों के लिए उठाकर रख दिया।

पति के लिए लाए दोनों फ्रेम अभी भी वैसे ही बँधे उसकी अलमारी में पड़े हैं। बच्चों के जन्म-दिन पर बच्चों के नए फोटो उनमें लगा देगी पर सहसा विचार आता है, पति के लिए लाई वस्तु पर किसी भी हालत में दूसरों की परछाईं नहीं पड़ने देगी चाहे वह उसके बच्चे ही क्यों न हों।

मार्टिन लूथर किंग की हत्या का समाचार उसके घाव को कुरेद गया। क्या अच्छे फूल केवल तोड़ने के लिए खिलते हैं ? हर महान आदमी की हत्या होती है। क्या महान बनना या होना अपनी मौत को निमंत्रण देना है ? उसे याद आया, उसने कहानी पढ़ी थी। एक बहुत ही सच्चे ईमानदार आदमी का दरवाज़ा मौत ने खटखटाया। वह आदमी बाहर आया और मौत को देखकर घबराया। उसके मन में घबराहट हुई क्योंकि अभी तो उसके कुछ भी अरमान पूरे नहीं हुए थे। उसने मौत के आगे हाथ-पैर जोड़े तो मौत ने कहा – "मैं इसलिए आई हूँ क्योंकि तुम अच्छे पुरुष हो और अच्छे आदमी को दुनिया में जीने का अधिकार नहीं"।

क्या डा. किंग के दोनों बच्चों ने भी अपनी आया से कहा होगा कि डैडी को बहुत बुरे आदमी ने मार दिया ?

शाम को वह बहुत इत्मीनान से अहाते में बच्चों को क्रिकेट का खेल समझा रही थी। मेरी के आ जाने से वह घर के कामों से फ़ुरसत पा गई है। मेरी का रह-रह कर नई देखी फिल्म का गीत गुनगुनाना सुनाई पड़ रहा है।

'मामा, मेरी फिर गाना गा रही है, पुडिंग में इलायची की जगह गोल मिर्च डाल देगी।' टिंकू चीखता है।

उसे हँसी आ जाती है। टिंकू अपने डैडी की तरह खाने-पीने में रुचि रखता है।

मेरी तार पर धुले कपड़ों को डालते हुए उन लोगों की ओर देखती है। भूरी बिल्ली अहाते की दीवार पर बैठी उनका खेल देख रही है। लाल छत वाले घर के लोग जल्दी-जल्दी सिनेमा के लिए घर से जा रहे हैं। पीली कोठी के सामने एक नीले रंग की

कार खड़ी है जिसकी खिड़की से एक कुत्ता लम्बी जीभ निकाले सड़क पर चुगती मुर्गी को देख रहा है ।

रसोई की मोहरी का पानी टमाटर के झाड़ों में जा रहा है । मेरी बार-बार दरवाज़े से निकल कर सड़क की ओर देखती है, फिर लौट आती है । वह शायद दूधवाले को देख रही है । उमा भी सड़क की ओर देखती है । बर्फ़ देने वाला लड़का अभी तक नहीं आया । कल ही तो फैक्टरी में उसने फोन करके अपना पता नोट करवाया था । कहीं वह भूल तो नहीं गया । पर मैनेजर ने तो कहा था कि उसने बर्फ़ बाँटने वाले लड़के की डायरी में उनका पता नोट करवा दिया है । वह बच्चों को खेल में लगाए रखती है, क्योंकि खेल बंद होते ही दोनों दूध माँगेंगे और दूधवाला अभी आया नहीं है ।

ठंड का मौसम शुरू हो गया था । धूप में सेंक आ गई थी । पेड़ों पर, अहाते की दीवार पर रंग-बिरंगी सुंदर-सुंदर चिड़ियाँ दिखती हैं । एक बार कहीं उसने पढ़ा था, ठंडे देशों की चिड़ियाँ ठंड के मौसम में दाने-पानी की खोज में भारत आने लगती हैं । टिंकू मेरी के साथ छुट्टियों में अहाते की दीवार के पास गुलाब के झुरमुट के पीछे छुपकर पिंजरे में चिड़ियों को फँसाने में लगा रहता है और निक्कू चारे का डिब्बा पकड़े मेरी के कहने का इंतज़ार करता रहता है कि कब वह कहे और वह चारा डाले ।

उमा को आश्चर्य होता है कि यही बँगला, पति की जिंदगी में कितना छोटा लगता था । हमेशा किसी मेहमान के आने पर बच्चों का कमरा खाली करना पड़ता था । पति मेहमान के जाने के बाद कहा करते थे, "उमा, क्यों न पीछे वाला हिस्सा खरीद लें ?" और अब वही घर बड़ा और खाली-खाली लगता है । मेरी भी कई बार कह चुकी है, 'मेम साहब, अकेले बँगले की सफ़ाई नहीं होती । क्यों न आधा हिस्सा किराए पर दे दें ।'

वह कइ बार सोचती है, घर को किराए पर उठाकर शिमला चली जाए । भाई के कितने पत्र आ चुके हैं । पर वह बच्चों का ध्यान कर यह विचार छोड़ देती है । कहीं बच्चों के मन में यह बात घर न कर जाए कि वे असहाय से दूसरों के घर जी रहे हैं । वह बच्चों को इसी पुराने वातावरण में रखना चाहती है, ताकि बच्चों के मन में किसी बात का दुख

न हो । वे यह न समझने लगें कि उनसे डैडी और उनका घर ईश्वर ने छीन लिया है । वह इन्हें इसी वातावरण में रखेगी । चाहे यह वातावरण खुद उसको कितना ही पीड़ा देने वाला क्यों न हो ।

मेरी कपड़ों पर आयरन कर रही थी । टिंकू पास बैठा मेरी से उपकार फ़िल्म की कहानी सुन रहा था । उमा ने देखा, मेरी नए जूते पहने थी ।

"अच्छा ! तो उसके डैडी को मार डालते हैं ?"

"हाँ ।"

"फिर... उसकी मामा खूब रोती......... ।"

"टिंकू, चलो बाहर चलें ।" उमा ने बातचीत का सिलसिला बीच में ही तोड़ दिया । वह दोनों बच्चों को लेकर पायरी पर खड़ी हो जाती है । सामने मैदान में लगे मीना बाज़ार की रोशनी यहाँ से साफ़ दिखती है । वह रोज़ बच्चों को यहीं खड़े होकर घूमती रोशनी दिखाती है ।

प्रश्न-अभ्यास

लघूत्तरात्मक प्रश्न

1. "क्या महान बनना या होना अपनी मौत को निमंत्रण देना है ?" का क्या आशय है ?
2. मौत किस तरह के आदमी को जल्दी उठा लेती है ?
3. पति के न रहने पर उमा को घर बड़ा क्यों लगने लगा है ?
4. नौकरानी मेरी बँगले का आधा हिस्सा किराए पर उठाने की सलाह क्यों देती है ?
5. उमा क्या सोचकर घर किराए पर नहीं उठाती ?
6. उमा से टिंकू रोज़ क्या सवाल करता था ?

निबंधात्मक प्रश्न

1. उमा ऐसा क्यों सोचती है कि वही पति को मौत के हाथों में सौंप आई है ?
2. पति की मौत के बाद उमा पर क्या ज़िम्मेदारी आ पड़ी ?
3. रोज़-रोज़ की किन छोटी-छोटी बातों या कामों से पता चलता है कि उमा अधिक भावुक हो गई है ?

seems to get worse when he comes to Barns because, being anxious not to mar the establishment of that relationship at the outset, we tend to ignore his social failings. We may even, on occasion, approve them. If a boy's only claim to distinction is his history of anti-social activity, then we help him to establish himself with us by lending an appreciative ear to his account of his depredations. We'll give him something better to boast about later on; in the meantime that's all he's got, and it's a jolly sight more than some people have, and more worthy of praise very often than a whole lifetime of negative obscurity. In the same way we often appear to be encouraging bad language, because one of the worst barriers between street boys and respectable adults is that the need to watch one's tongue causes restraint. For these are not your middle-class children to whom swearing is a delicious novelty and who have a phase and grow out of it. It is their native idiom, and one has to understand it. Your respectable adult, who is shocked by bad language, never enjoys the experience of being called, with a mixture of admiration and affection, "You bloody old sod." It is often pure love when I am called "You bald-headed old bugger." But even when it is what we all understand it to be, we don't think it important enough to risk messing things up at the start, so that we once heard a boy boasting, after he had been here a week or two, "I can swear in front of Benjy now!" God bless him. I haven't heard him swear for weeks.

Obviously, a certain amount of discretion has to be used. We cannot allow a new boy always to do exactly everything he wants to do, and he would not like it if we did. That in itself would be a form of neglect which might mean that we didn't care for him. Here, again, one has to rely largely upon intuition, but of course we have at Barns a machinery of government which works more or less independently of adults and prevents serious breaches of routine and good order. Certainly when the relationship has once been established it is possible to be remarkably frank and outspoken about a boy's failings because he realises that one *is* talking about his failings, and not about *him*. That is why—to return to where I started—I was pleased to find that Jimmy Gay had not been put off by what I had been saying to him—he knew I still loved him.

Chapter Seven

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST-AID

"The young Scout must be taught that the object of first-aid is not to make him a sort of amateur doctor, but only to prevent harm being done until expert attention can be given, and to attend to anything that requires immediate attention . . ."
"Boy Scout Tests and How to Pass Them."

I HAVE known occasions indeed when I have had a most fierce and violent row with a boy so that I was spluttering with rage and he in tears. A quarter of an hour later we have met in my private room for a weekly talk and have chatted amicably together with absolutely no reference to—and no thought of—the squabble we had just had.

It seems to me that in these circumstances there is set up something very much akin to what Psycho-analysts call "the analytical situation." Whatever else this may mean (and I do not profess to understand it very fully) it clearly involves certain important elements arising out of the relationship between the analyst and the patient. In the first place there is the transference—that is to say, the direction to the analyst of some measure of the feelings originally directed to the first love-object—the parents. This has aspects both of love and hate, but the "positive," or love aspects, will usually predominate in a successful analysis. In the second place the patient recognises in the analyst not a person who is there to lay down the moral laws or to enumerate educational principles. Questions of "good" and "bad" and "ought" do not come to the forefront of discussions. The analyst is recognised as a person who will never fail to appreciate the point of view of the patient, and who is out for the same end as the patient. In these circumstances, and only in these circumstances, the analyst carries on his work, though doubtless the analytical situation involves more than just that. But I find that it is in these circumstances, too, that I am best able to carry on my own work. It is widely held and proclaimed by writers of the psychoanalytic school that it is not possible for anyone in the relationship of teacher, parent, or similar person to establish this relationship, because they are necessarily concerned with prohibitions and compulsions and the insistence on a point of view which the child sees as at variance with his own. I do not find it impossible. I find that it is possible for me to take up, and

for the children to recognise in me a dual rôle. On the one hand I am the Warden— the person ultimately responsible for the good conduct of the House and all in it—however much I may by delegation share that responsibility. On the other hand I am Willsy, to whom one can talk with the utmost freedom about anything and who can always appreciate one's point of view. The degree to which the boys are able to distinguish between these two functions often astonishes me, and I would not at one time have thought it possible. Upon examination, however, it is perhaps not as improbable as it may seem, and may indeed serve a very useful purpose by splitting up the ambivalence—the negative side is directed to the Warden, with his restrictions and prohibitions, the positive to Wills. There is thus far less of the conflict and confusion which may arise from having both these kinds of feeling towards the same person.

I am not trying to suggest that everyone at Barns clearly distinguishes between my two functions ; but a fair portion distinguish clearly, and another fair portion less clearly. But in case of doubt I can usually establish the " Willsy " relationship by taking a boy into my private room. This room is not my sitting room, nor is it my office:* I use it only for talking to boys in my "Willsy" capacity. We do not discuss any present troubles the boy may be going through unless he raises them, and then my attitude is very carefully a non-moral one, viewing the thing purely from the boy's point of view rather from the point of view of authority or society—though I may sometimes add, if it seems expedient, a word about how some other people might view the matter.

These interviews may take place sporadically because the occasion seems to demand it ; but they also take place at regular intervals. Normally I see every boy in turn at the rate of two a night on the night I am free from routine duties—that is to say, about six or eight boys a week. The first will come along at 8 o'clock, is given a sweet (rationing notwithstanding) and told that he will have to go at 8.10 promptly by the clock on the table. At 8.10 he goes and the second boy comes at 8.15, leaving at 8.25. A boy feels much more at his ease if he knows exactly how long he is going to stay. How many of us who are older and wiser have never mastered the technique of getting up and going ! I make the interview end at the appointed time even if we are in the middle of an interesting conversation—we can always, if necessary, continue it to-morrow night ! Another important point about these discussions is that

* I seem to have an enormous suite of rooms. In theory the room in question is the spare bedroom ; my office is the staff common-room.

they are not only strictly confidential, but they are never (so far as I can manage it !) carried over into my other relationship. Jimmy Gay is an interesting example of this, too. He is a great raconteur and can be seen at almost any time holding a group of boys spell-bound with his stories. We were talking about his stories in my room one day, and I said what a good idea it would be to write some of them down. He thought it would be a good idea too, so I bought him an imposing-looking manuscript book to write them down in, and every now and then he comes and reads them to me. Another time we were talking about his own adventures—which have been not a few, chiefly taking long journeys on the backs of lorries and getting himself sent home by the Police by rail. I mentioned in a casual sort of way that he always seemed to be truanting in those days, but not now. "Ah, weel, ye ken," he said, "Schule's guid here."

To-day I was presiding at the Committee (I am President this month. This is very unusual, but we won't go into that now) and Jimmy was brought before us by the Officer on Duty, on a charge of being late for school, of mucking up a lesson, and of generally making himself a nuisance in school. Jimmy has had several such charges lately and indeed the General Meeting had to ask the Chairman to give him a talking-to about it. So we were pretty severe with Jimmy to-day. I gave him a real good row, referring to the way he made himself and other boys late by holding them in holes and corners with his stupid stories that no one but a chump would waste his time on. We weren't choosing our words with care, we were just fed up with Jimmy and—for the moment—with everything about him. The fact that at another time and in another place I myself had been very appreciative of the same "stupid" stories was neither here nor there. Jimmy didn't refer to it because I suppose he felt it belonged somewhere else, and because he vaguely realised that we were not to be taken exactly litterally —the main thing was that he should understand how fed up with him his behaviour made us feel. But I was very careful not to say—"You're the twerp who said to me the other day that you don't truant now because school's good here, yet you make yourself a nuisance there and do your best to make it *bad*." If I had, he would have been very careful what he said to me in future.

Although I have ventured to make a comparison between my relation to the child, and that of a psychoanalyst, I should not for one moment like it to be thought that I regard myself as a psychoanalyst, or as any other kind of psychotherapist. I deprecate

most strongly any attempt by laymen* to tinker about with a child's mind and my experience has been that those who know least about it are the most confident in setting themselves up as amateur psychotherapists. I have compared elsewhere† my position to that of the Matron of a hospital, whose function it is to provide the atmosphere in which the doctors can carry on their work, and to carry out the treatment prescribed by the doctors. In very many routine cases the nursing staff carry out the therapy from beginning to end, the medical staff merely watching to see that all is going according to plan. So, too, can the trained psychiatric social worker effect a certain amount of routine therapy by carrying out certain rules, keeping his eyes open, and using his common-sense.

The first function of these "therapeutic talks" (as I confess I call them privately, but of course not to the child) is that they are a means of taking special notice of the child—a thing which is always appreciated and which helps to create and maintain the feeling of being at least cared for. If they did nothing else they would justify themselves in that way. But one can also apply a certain amount of psychological first-aid. I have given a small example *en passant*—how, in conversation with Jimmy Gay, who only seemed to be able to get a sense of achievement through rebelliousness—I referred to his skill as a story teller and to the fact that he was no longer a truant. His stories I praised because I know he likes to regard them as an achievement. The cessation of truanting I merely drew his attention to casually, in case he had not noticed it, but here I neither praised nor blamed. No blame, because after all it is not blameworthy, and no praise because that might have associated me in his mind with the various authorities against whom, as a truant, he fought. But it may have implanted a little seed of pride which, if it grows, may lessen the need to seek a sense of achievement in other less desirable ways. Equally, of course, it may not, but at any rate no harm is done and there are many opportunities of dropping such seeds.

Arthur Collins is an example of something a little more positive than the mere dropping of a seed. Arthur was said to have a drunken and unfaithful father, an overbearing and ambitious mother who had no insight into his problems, and to have thought he was not wanted at home. We compared families—how many brothers and sisters we had, what our respective positions were in our families,

* By a layman I mean an untrained person, not merely a non-medical person. There are of course other kinds of psychological training besides the medical.

† "The Hawkspur Experiment"—George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1941.

what our mothers and fathers were like. In spite of reports we had received about the father, Arthur seemed to have a genuinely warm feeling towards him, but there was marked reserve about his mother. Apropos nothing in particular, I told him of a funny episode in my own childhood. I was teasing my mother once when she was preparing some fish for cooking. She threatened in fun to lay about me with the fish unless I desisted. I dared her to do so, and we had a mock battle in which my mother chased me with a herring.*

" *My* mother," said Arthur, "chases me with a poker ! " " That's a more risky kind of joke than my mother's," I said. With a good deal of feeling Arthur replied, " It's no' a joke." No, it appeared that Mrs. Collins was quite serious in threatening him with a poker. It makes no difference if (as is quite possible) he had invented the whole thing. That is the sort of woman he conceived his mother to be. He described various episodes with vividness and feeling. "I bet you'd like to bend her over and lay about *her* with a poker," I said. He certainly would. There was no doubt about that, and from his description of how he would set about it, it was clear that that idea had not originated with *me*. He had obviously given the matter much thought, and considered himself very wicked for harbouring such ideas, which we may assume he had never expressed to anyone before. By sharing his phantasies with me he was able in some measure to " get them off his chest," and my unshocked attitude would lessen his feeling of guilt and shame. All this, of course, is just scratching on the surface, and I have no doubt that Arthur's desire to flog his mother's posterior had much more to it than a simple desire to get his own back. But that is something I cannot touch—it would need the services of a psychotherapist. We must hope that such first-aid as I can apply would help him to keep the symptoms within reasonable bounds.

I give two other examples of the sort of thing that takes place in these interviews because, although in practice they take up very little time and may seem of little importance, they do appear to have a valuable influence.

The first concerns Frankie Fox, of whom mention has already been made. Frankie (aged 13) was a boy of normal intelligence who had little interest in academic studies, but was an exceptionally keen nature student. He had an extraordinary " way " with animals and nature lore was a never-failing source of interest to him. He was a most pronounced individualist, finding difficulty in mixing

* Over 70 and nearly blind, my mother still retains her sense of fun and scorn of false dignity. She will not mind my broadcasting this silly incident.

happily with the rest of the community, but beyond that had given hitherto relatively little trouble. It seemed likely that he would grow up an oddity—a "character," but would find some sort of not too unsatisfactory adjustment. Unfortunately his younger brother Alec was highly intelligent and a good scholar. He passed the secondary school entrance examination and won a bursary. It was about this time that Frankie became really difficult. He became anti-social instead of merely a-social, and began to do a good deal of stealing. I made an opportunity to talk to him about the way our educational system tends to "glorify" the academic type of mind because the people who run it tend to have that type of mind themselves, and explained to him that there are other equally valuable types of mind which, while they may not be appreciated or exploited by our educational system, do often find appreciation in the world at large. I spoke of artists, administrators, leaders, and of various other kinds of specially gifted people who might be quite devoid of the capacity to pass examinations, yet able to do things which the most brilliant scholar may not be able to do if he lived to be a thousand. And I made it quite clear that he was in some such category. I wondered whether it was all so much waste of breath, but one day a visitor twitted him gently about still being at the primary school when his young brother was at the secondary. He replied, to the astonishment and amusement of the visitor, "I haven't got the academic type of mind. I've got another kind. Mr. Wills says there are other kinds of minds just as good as academic minds." I am not going to say that from that moment Frankie's troubles were over. But there was considerable improvement, and Frankie became a positive asset to the place before he left at fourteen to take a job at a zoo. Unfortunately, he was still too much of an individualist to keep this eminently suitable job, but it seems likely that he will find his level before long.

My other illustration also concerns two brothers. Cecil Bryant was nine when he came to Barns. He had been a persistent truant, had done some stealing, and was subject to temper tantrums. After about a year at Barns all seemed to be going well. There was much less stealing and fewer tantrums. Then came the news that his young brother was to come to Barns. He seemed worried about this, wrote to his mother warning her against it, said he was going to do his best to stop wee Harry coming to "this dump." When asked why he didn't want Harry to enjoy the amenities from which he had derived such great benefit and happiness (or words to that effect), he would break out into a tirade against "this dump," saying he

wouldn't like his wee brother to go through all that he had had to go through, and so forth. However, Harry came in due course and Cecil immediately constituted himself his brother's protector. To the uninformed and superficial observer it was very charming to see Cecil "doing the big brother." But as Harry was quite capable of taking care of himself and, in any case, being very popular, needed no taking care of, it was to say the least, rather odd. Cecil would imagine assaults and insult of which Harry was quite unaware, and at the same time his own conduct deteriorated. He began to steal more than he had ever stolen, and his tantrums returned. It was clear that Cecil was consumed with jealousy of Harry, but was trying to compensate for these unacceptable feelings by his attitude of protection—just as Jacob Everson had to run away home to see if his mother was all right. His stealing was rather pathetic—he really seemed to take the most elaborate pains to try and get found out, presumably (though this is guesswork) in the hope of being punished and thus assuaging the guilt he felt for his wicked feelings about his brother. I let it all run on until Cecil himself seemed to realise that things were not going with him as well as they had, and then I suggested that he came and had a chat with me once a week. Weekly talks, which are exceptional, last for twenty minutes instead of ten. We make a regular appointment for, it might be, Wednesdays at 7.30. At 7.30 I am in my room ready. If the boy comes, well and good. If not, I do not send for him because normally I do not want to create the feeling that he *must* come. But afterwards I make a point of saying, "you didn't turn up at 7.30," so as to register the fact that I wanted him, and missed him. As long as the boy needs the talks and is getting anything from them he will not forget. When he starts forgetting they are usually discontinued.

Cecil and I then, talked inconsequentially for a week or two of this and that and then—apparently equally inconsequentially—I started telling stories about various people I had known. In due time I came round to someone in a similar position to Cecil (without of course drawing the comparison)—someone who was jealous of his younger brother. Then I told how this feeling can come about, how it can lead to difficulties if one tries to pretend it isn't there, how once one recognises its presence and realises it is a natural feeling one can cope with it. I deliberately made this a "serial story," knowing that if a bell were rung (so to speak) Cecil would want more next week, but that if he didn't want more next week, there would be no point in going on with it. But a bell was rung all right. When I enquired casually next time what we had been talking

about last week Cecil had it all in detail and was anxious for more. So eventually I did apply it to his own case.

This, it seems to me, is the furthest the layman ought to go in the interpretation of symptoms. It was abundantly obvious that Cecil *was* jealous of his little brother, and it is only when a thing is obvious beyond any shadow of doubt that I venture as a rule to act on it. It is my fixed rule not to take positive action on a theory that is no more than a theory, unless we are absolutely stumped for something to do, and something urgently needs to be done. In that case the action based on theory must be of a kind which, if the theory is wrong, cannot possibly have any harmful effects. This condition, too, was fulfilled in the case of the Bryants, because if Cecil had not been jealous of his little brother it is highly improbable that the story would have made any impression on him; and if it had made no impression it would not have been continued. I may add that the talks had an extraordinarily good effect on Cecil. The improvement in his general demeanour was most marked, and the stealing and tantrums stopped straight away.

So we chat away—sometimes with a particular end in view, sometimes with only the general aim of providing the feeling of being cared for; sometimes we merely have a quick game of chess. There is an important particular in which my practice differs from that of the psychotherapist—it is no part of my aim to maintain the attitude of friendly reserve which the psychotherapist finds essential. In very many cases the children I am talking to have been denied affection and I, therefore, do not hesitate to shew it; as often as not the interview takes place with the boy sitting on my knee. However much a boy may be embarrassed by that sort of thing in public (and that is all a matter of upbringing) the position is quite different when there is no one else about. The casual visitor to Barns may think us rather a sloppy lot with our kissing and cuddling and terms of endearment. There is much more of that sort of thing at Barns than you will find in any modern edition of Dotheboys Hall, but no more than you will find in any decent family—and we are taking the place, in many cases, of the family.

When the boy leaves my room I listen for his footsteps up the three wooden stairs outside and they are generally the light, hurried steps of someone who is excitedly pleased with himself. Though to be sure they might equally well be the light, hurried footsteps of someone who is jolly glad to have escaped at last!

The five minutes' gap between visits serves two purposes. It more or less eliminates the embarrassment of the second boy arriving before the first has gone, and it gives me time to make a few notes of what

has transpired on a special sheet in the boy's dossier. The dossier contains two such sheets of "serial" notes, of which these are seen by no one but me, while the others are notes made at staff meetings.

Staff meetings take place once a week after supper, and all the staff attend. By all the staff I mean everybody—not merely, as some institutions would mean by that phrase, the teaching and administrative staff. Our staff meeting is for all the adults, though I have to admit that there might be difficulties about this if our domestic staff were not such exceptional people. But exceptional people or not, they have the same opportunities as anyone else of observing the boys, and they see very often a side that is hidden from the rest of us. So they all come, and we discuss half-a-dozen boys each week (in alphabetical order) so that each boy comes up for discussion every six weeks or so—making allowance for occasional times when Staff meetings cannot be held. Discussion begins by my reading over such social history as we may have, and the boys' personal particulars (age, I.Q. etc.), and then the Staff meeting notes from the time of his arrival—unless by mutual consent we feel it to be unnecessary in any given case. Then we just chat, and I make notes. Occasionally—though not very often—we have nothing to record but S.F., which means Steadily Forward. But it is only very rarely that there is nothing to record—of his attitude to so and so, an office he holds or has just resigned, his progress or lack of it in school, an interesting remark, a change in symptoms or progress of symptom for better or for worse. Sometimes we merely record such things as these, though sometimes there are also recommendations as to something that might be done or said by somebody or specific treatment to be tried, even if it is only a worm powder. He is to get some "extra attention" from so and so; he is to be encouraged to resign a job that might prove too much for him, before he becomes too discouraged; a new method of curing enuresis is to be tried; the I.Q. is questioned and he is to be given another test. (We once found that the I.Q. of a boy which was said by the referring authority to be 92, was, in fact, only 77!) and so on. Often there are conflicting views expressed (and recorded) and the meeting rarely finishes before midnight.

I give a specimen sheet of staff notes, which is necessarily rather a colourless one in order that the boy may not be recognised. He is the "President" of Chapter One.

Richard Smith. Date of Birth—1929. I.Q. 96. Admitted to Barns 12.12.194–.

12.12.4–. Sturdy little tough, looks as if he might have been a nuisance by reason of high spirits—sense of fun might have got him into trouble. Likes school (he says!) (W.D.W.).

30.12.4–. Full of beans and mischief, but apart from reluctance to wash, no outstanding symptom.

16.1.4–. Only one of his batch who did not bunk. Tore up some of his clothes, saying, "Why shouldn't I . . . they're my own!"

6.2.4–. Diction and vocabulary very bad, always sounds truculent. R.W. (see below for meanings of abbreviations and initials) thinks he always looks worried. Frankly says he doesn't want to go home—would much rather be here. Always damaging boots, maliciously. His father is a bootmaker. An aggressive manner, J.P. says he was always very offensive and aggressive with her, kicking and spitting at her. Now much changed, becoming affectionate, takes her hand, fetches her a chair, etc. Arithmetic good enough for him to be in charge of "dippy" section, but English extremely backward (T.). Not aggressive with other boys—never appears at Committee. Quite keen on school (T.).

13.3.4–. A very happy boy now. Still looks worried (R.W.)—due to lack of vocabulary and faulty diction? No reluctance to wash now.

24.4.4–. A very happy, attractive, cheerful little boy, though very upset by unkindness, real or imagined. Speaks a good deal at House-meetings. Singing lessons might help his diction (J.W.). A great storer of junk beneath the mattress. Some wet nightshirts lately. Says he did once wet the bed.

12.6.4–. A cherub (K.R.). Nothing to add to above except to note his refusal to accept bullying from Alf. Blake. Very backward in school, but very happy.

23.7.4–. During last two weeks has seemed unstable, less happy Badly needs object of affection (A.H.) At present seems to need to hate everyone except love object of moment (W.D.W.). Says he dislikes R.W., but doesn't know why. This all seems to date from time of J.P. going on holiday and K.R. leaving.

6.11.4–. Relapsed considerably during A.H.'s stay here—perhaps associated with K.R.'s departure? Very thick with and loyal to A. Blake, to whom, however, he is a rival for Janet's affections. Always wants to do things his own way—"I'll only do *this* much" (B.S.). Wants May to stay at 25 till he's 25 so he can marry her. Definitely seems unstable now, and face in repose is worried again.

8.1.4–. Very much under A. Blake's influence. Perhaps a little progress since last note, but still tends to bluster, etc. Went home at Xmas to stay with Granny, which he looked forward to and appreciated very much. Went to see his father while at home, but declined an invitation to stay there.

13.2.4–. Seems somewhat more stable. A keen and loyal member of C.A. A good committee man, with flashes of intelligence. Suggested that Jack McKay, who was rebelling against C.A., should be invited to meetings to see that their work was in his own interest. Quietly happy instead of boisterous (R.W.). Purposeful (J.W.).

19.3.4–. Treasurer of C.A. Now very friendly with Wally Straight, even to the extent of sulking when W.S. sulks, but in general happy and purposeful Rather a pest at table, but only high spirits. Still very reluctant to say "please."

22.4.4–. Was Chairman of C.A. for a week, and then resigned following a row with Wills. Now Treasurer again. Father said to have "joined up or something," but has a nice lady looking after the house

who says Dick can come home whenever he likes. Rather odd that he cannot read in view of relatively high I.Q. Wills to talk to him about this and suggest extra tuition with B.S.

27.5 4.–. Extra tuition suggestion rejected. Self-righteous wee laddie. Loves to be made a fuss of. Now much as he was last spring, happy, &c., but more mature with it. Went home to see his mother at Easter. She has "taken him up" and gets upset if he doesn't write, though she never wrote him once until a month or two ago. (Parents are separated)

1.7.4– Mrs. Smith came on visiting Sunday with a man whom he called Uncle, but told other boys he was his father. K.R. (on visit) sees more decided change in him than in any other boy. Still his ebullient cheerfulness, but with more stable foundation. An Elder.

19.8.4–. After being involved in trouble with J. Everson, W. Straight and Ted Bounce (while Wills away) asked for suspension from C.A., for a month and a "keeper." Was suspended for a fortnight and given K R. as keeper. Above due only to high spirits– desire for a keeper really desire for a rest from responsibility (K.R.). Misses father-figure (W.D.W.).

28.10 4–. Now in Ben's class. Perhaps overcoming his reluctance to read. Still a trifle bumptious, but very little. Gang-leader of Torbank. Conscientious and keen. Happy and purposeful. Extraordinarily good at looking after Jack McKay.

2.12.4 . S.F. Very kind and helpful (M.F.). A very conscientious gang-leader and officer-on-duty. Vice-Chairman. Reads very badly, and takes the line that he won't rather than he can't.

28.1.4–. Reading difficulty now largely overcome. No longer refuses to believe he can read, and is making great progress. Was elected Chairman under new regime, but resigned following criticism from Wills and is now very happily Minister of Money. Dr. might be spoken to about adenoids.

3.3.4–. Rapid improvement in reading. No trouble. A happy purposeful child. Growing confidence in self, but will not attend Wyn's reading class if good readers are there. Very good at dealing in a sensible and friendly way with difficult boys. Still happily Minister of Money.

27.4.4–. Dr. says adenoid condition O.K. When Frankie Fox (Prime Minister) left, was elected P.M., and is doing very well Extraordinary power of heart intelligence (J.W.). Returned from Easter holidays very friendly with everyone and pleased with himself.

17.6.4–. Now Minister of Work, but so conscientious that he has made himself very unpopular with other boys. Was later sacked and generally "framed" by Paul Johnson (P.M.). P J. admits having framed him. Wills wrote him a letter while away, and has had a talk with P.J. who admits his spiteful feelings towards D.S. Somewhat happier since getting Wills' letter, and is reinstated as Minister of Work.

18.8.4–. S.F. Inclined to bully a little. Much more confidence in himself. Wants to go on a farm, which is a good thing as it would not be good for him to go home.

20.10.4–. Due to leave at end of term. Great deal of malicious bullying in Wills' absence. Wills to see him to-morrow. He wants to go on same farm as A Blake.

17.11.4–. Now President, and a very good one. Very thick now with P. Johnson. We can see much improvement in this boy. His outstanding feature is his strong capacity for sympathy which, howeve

rarely goes so far as to get him involved in serious misdemeanours with others, however much he may feel with them. Is at present either displacing some resentment against parents on staff, or is doing so in sympathy with P. Johnson. There is every reason to hope he may do well, as he is fundamentally " good," though rather dependent at present on father-figure—a situation which would be met in a suitable farm job where he would live in.

8.1.4–. Went to a farm job, 2.1.4–.

In making these notes we sometimes record the initials of the persons making a particular comment, and these initials are given in brackets. There is no need to give them in full, but I should perhaps explain that C.A. means Citizens' Association, and is not the initials of a person! T. is Ben's predecessor, " Keepers" and " Elders " are roughly what their names imply. Torbank is the name of a dormitory. The five dormitories are named after local hills—Meldon, Cademuir, Glenrath, Torbank and Whitelaw. S.F. means " Steadily forward "—a little domestic joke.

So much for the Staff Meetings. But there exists another means by which a boy's progress is watched over, though it has existed, alas, more in theory than in practice up to now. I refer to the Advisory Committee on Treatment.

It is my firm conviction that no such institution as Barns should presume to carry on its work without psychological supervision, though war circumstances have compelled us very largely to do so. Our Advisory Committee, of which we once had great hopes, consists of a Medical Psychologist, an Educational Psychologist, the Physician who normally attends the boys, the Social Worker, the Head-teacher and myself. It began to meet once every six weeks or so, going through a few cases each time in much the same way as the Staff Meeting. After two or three meetings, alas, it seems to have succumbed to the difficulties of war-time travel, and increased demands nearer home, though we still hope it is not dead, but sleepeth. I find the lack of such psychological supervision a very grave handicap, and would not in normal circumstances tolerate it.

Chapter Eight

RELIGION

"I saluted the brave Scotch merchant . . and taking him by the hand I said to him: 'Blessed be God, we are once again among Christians.' He smiled, and answered: 'Do not rejoice too soon.'"

Daniel Defoe—"Robinson Crusoe."

I am a Quaker, and what I have tried to do at Barns has been done in that particular way because I am a Quaker.

In saying this I do not commit my fellow members of the Society of Friends to agreement with this method or with my views, because Quakerism is not a set of dogma or a creed, and my Quakerism may differ from another person's. Many Friends find that Quakerism leadss them to pacifism; some feel it their duty to serve in the armed force. I mention this only to illustrate how widely different interpretations of Quakerism may diverge, so that the reader may not assume that what follows is necessarily typical of the Society of Friends.

Although Friends have no creed or dogma, there are certain beliefs which have a very wide currency among them. One of these, perhaps one of the most important and widely held, is the belief in "That of God in every man." This is something more than mere conscience. It is, if you will, the breath that God breathed into Adam; it is Browning's "spark" that "disturbs our clod"; it is Whitman's "seed perfection" which nestles within us. This of God within us—to adopt another metaphor—is like water in that it perpetually seeks its own level, in which we may either help or hinder it. If we "give it its head," as George Fox and John Woolman, and many others have done, it may lead us into many strange courses, but our lives will be rich and purposeful, because they are guided by Him who guides the stars in their courses and whom we believe to have a purpose in the universe, though we have only the most fitful glimpses of what that purpose is. But while now we see through a glass darkly, we believe that when all men walk by the light that is within them, then indeed we shall see light.

It is this belief that has maintained an essential unity in our Society in spite of its lack of creed and dogma—that has, indeed, made them unnecessary; it is this belief, falteringly practised as it is here haltingly expressed, which has been the mainspring of our work at Barns.

If another man's actions seem to me to be evil, it must be for one of two reasons—either *he* is not following the promptings of the Holy Spirit—or *I* am not. If he claims that what he does is due

to the guidance of that of God within him, then I must examine my own position with great care, and I must be most considerate in my dealings with him. Hence the sympathy of the Quaker for those who resist the demands of the State for conscience's sake. This is not due, as many may think, to the fact that so many Friends in time of war feel it right to resist the State's demands; indeed Friends' expressions of sympathy with such persons would be stronger if fewer of their own people were involved. It is simply that they cannot feel it right to resist the promptings of God in another man, little as they may be able to understand those promptings. In such a case obviously—for the Quaker—any kind of harshness or coercion is out of the question. But what of the man whose ways seem evil, and who makes no such claim, who may indeed scoff at any such idea? What should be our attitude to him?

We cannot fail, it seems to me, to condemn what we know to be wrong, but it is not for us to condemn the wrong-doer. What we must do is to appeal to "that of God" that is in him, and try to get him to look inward to the springs of his conduct in the hope that he may find a worthier motive than those that have hitherto led him. I claim no novelty for this attitude. It is one with which many people, both now and in the past, would agree. The question is, how is this particular approach to be put into actual practice?

The founders of what has come to be known as "the Pennsylvania System" had much the same approach, and it led them to a method which some of the least humanitarian among us to-day would condemn. They put all their criminals in separate cells in a specially constructed building, with absolutely no communion with each other and the minimum of contact with anyone else. The theory was that the compulsory meditation and self-communion thus imposed would cause the prisoner in time to see the wickedness of his way—even perhaps to find his way to the Light Within—and lead him in time to the stool of repentance. In fact, as we now know, it made him bitter and resentful, and he spent his time cogitating on the wrongs that had been done to him, instead of those he had done to others—unless indeed he became quite insane.

Here, however, I must insert a parenthetical explanation. There may be those who are by now accusing me of confusing those two entirely different concepts, "crime," and "sin," which, they will say, are by no means the same thing; while it may be our duty to be tender-hearted and forgiving to those who sin against God and us (and who may or may not have broken a law) we are not necessarily committed to such an attitude in the case of those who have broken a law—and who may or may not have sinned. I

confess that this always seems to me sheer casuistry. Truly, the terms sinner and criminal are not synonymous; but they are in a large degree co-extensive. There are at the one end those who have "sinned" by, *e.g.*, committing adultery, or by robbing the poor and fatherless by methods technically legal, and who are not criminals; at the other end are those who commit "crimes" by failing to fill in a form required of them by the State, or by refusing Military Service, but who cannot on that account be called "sinners." But between these two extremes is the common run of burglars, cut-throats, brigands, bandits, and what you will, whose offences are both criminal and sinful. Am I to have two attitudes to such persons —one as an individual and another as a citizen? I find that very difficult—especially as this is supposed to be a Christian State—and it seems to me that our attitude, whether as citizens or as individuals, should be based on the teachings of Him whom we claim to follow.

If then (to revert) we want people to see that of God in themselves, the best and most obvious way to help them, it seems to me, is to let them see God made manifest in other people. As Christians we believe that God is love, and I have failed badly in what I have written up to now if I have not made it clear that it is just love that has been lacking in the lives of so many of the people who start life like the boys of whom I am writing here, and who grow up to be called criminals.

It seems presumptuous and very far from humble in us to claim that what we are trying to do is to shew forth God not only with our lips but in our lives; and He knows how miserably we fail. But that *is* what we have got to try to do, just because it has so rarely been done in the case of the children in our care. We must so conduct ourselves that they will come to see in us something they have hitherto not known, and which it is no sin to covet for themselves. They must be loved in order that they may learn to love. That is not only Christian teaching; it is sound modern psychology.

How then in particular is this love to be expressed? It is difficult (though not so difficult as those might think who have never tried it!) to "turn on" love at will to all and sundry; but at least we can try to cultivate a loving attitude. We have explicit instructions about this—"Do good to them that despitefully use you"; "Love your enemies"; "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." I cannot feel that I am overcoming evil with good if I coerce a boy by means of corporal punishment—or any other kind of punishment—however successful it may at the moment appear. This is the "other reason" referred to in Chapter Two for the non-use of punishment at Barns. If punishment overcomes evil at all (which I do not for one moment believe) it has overcome it with

evil, as I cannot believe that the deliberate infliction of pain for the sake of inflicting pain (and not incidentally and unwillingly, as in the case of, *e.g.*, pulling out a tooth) is anything but evil.

It is true that there must be order, there must be some measure of discipline, there must be a respected authority even in a small community of forty persons. That I do not attempt to deny. But in order that there may be the minimum of misunderstanding and resentment, let us, so far as possible, make such rules as may be necessary *between us*, so that the need for and the occasion of them may be seen by everybody ; and if breaches of these rules should occur, let us also deal with those *between us*, for the same reason. It may be found necessary for the common good—or even for the good of the individuals concerned, to prevent worse befalling them —to restrict the liberty of some, which may seem very much like punishing them. But if the decision is arrived at as the result of a discussion among his peers, he may at least understand the reason for it. It may even be that the community—consisting as it does very largely of persons holding beliefs other than those of which I have been speaking—may come to inflict some mild penalties, as indeed they have at Barns. But at any rate that helps them to learn how futile (if they do not know already !) and unfriendly punishment is. I have known boys restrict the liberty of their own friends, for his own good or for the good of all. They are very much more reluctant to inflict upon a personal friend a penalty that is purely punitive. The orthodox may say that this indicates a very poor sense of duty. To me it indicates that to the uncomplicated and severely logical mind of the child, punishment is incompatible with love.

Men are not necessarily aware of the Inner Light which burns within them, and it is obvious that we who believe in its presence in all men must be extremely careful in our dealings with others lest we make it more difficult for them to discover it ; lest we do anything to hinder its growth or make it difficult for men to follow its promptings. This is one reason why we are so extremely reluctant to do violence, physical or intellectual, to another's person. This is what leads us to be tolerant of many things which we should perhaps consider wrong for ourselves, and obviously it involves a passionate belief in freedom, for it is only in freedom that there can be real growth. I have given already several reasons why we at Barns believe in the maximum amount of freedom for the boys in our care. They were for the most part reasons based on a rational judgment of what was most likely to be helpful in contributing to " the therapy of the dis-social," but the underlying and fundamental

reason—for me—is, as with the non-use of punishment, a religious one. I believe this was true of Homer Lane in his work at the Little Commonwealth, and frankly I very much doubt whether it is possible to carry on such a regime unless one's methods have a spiritual origin. I know that there are many "progressive" schools, run by professed rationalists, in which there is as much freedom and as little punishment as at Barns, and there is even one well-known school, the head of which is not ashamed to use the word love. But these are Boarding Schools where the children live only for part of the year, the rest being spent in the respectable middle-class homes from which the children came, and in which—however difficult and neurotic the children may be—there is some kind of home background, and at least some training in the social graces. With us it is different. The children are with us practically all the time, and the training they had before they came to us is, one is sometimes tempted to think, worse than none at all. There are times when we seem to be doing no useful work at all, when a boy upon whom we have set the highest hopes will do something that seems to suggest we have never touched him, times when the whole business seems so discouraging as to be hardly worth-while; times even when we feel that we should like to scream. If, at those times, our work was based *only* on rational grounds, we should begin to doubt its value, and I very much doubt whether I could keep on with it. But because we are able to say with T. S. Eliot (however unscientifically!) "Take no thought of the harvest, but only of proper sowing"*, I am able to carry on.

This is one reason why I find it very difficult to argue with the orthodox. The orthodox will assess results, and if these do not seem good will say: "There's something wrong with your methods." When I assess results (so far as they can be assessed) and find them doubtful, I say, "we have not applied the method properly," for we base our methods upon "what we have received" and not upon what the results seem to be. This is highly unscientific and improper; but it is, I venture to think, with all humility, the kind of obstinacy that has made for much progress, in many fields, in the past.

So much, then (and perhaps too much) for my own religious attitude and the religion underlying our work. But what of religious teaching?

When I, as a conscientious objector, appeared before a Tribunal, I was asked whether I taught pacifism to the boys at Barns. My reply was that I hoped so, and as I watched the several eyebrows

* In "The Rock."

of the Tribunal rising in unison, I explained that as my whole work and my attitude to the boys were based on the religious beliefs from which my pacifism springs, I hoped the boys would in time tend towards that religion as a result of having seen it in action but that the deliberate inculcation of pacifist doctrine would be; contrary to what I conceived to be sound educational principles.

If ever there was a pious hope (in any sense of the phrase you like!) that seems to have been one, because I see very little sign of any Barns boy inclining towards my particular brand of religion. But that again is due to my faulty exposition of it, and I must try to do better. Not that I really look for immediate results; our boys are already abnormal enough without adding the abnormality (as it would be, in a boy of 12) of piety! But I do devoutly hope that in later years some at least of our boys, when they reach the age at which people begin to think about religion, may say to themselves, "Those people at Barns had something--I must try to find out what it was."

That, then, as I have implied earlier, we are presumptuous enough to regard as our main religious teaching, and there are many people who might think there should be no more than that. But in fact we do indulge in some religious teaching by word of mouth also, and it seems to me that there are excellent reasons for this, even on purely "rational" grounds.

I had the great good fortune to be the son of pious parents. One of my earliest memories is of a highly illuminated text which hung on one of the walls of our home—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Even before I had learnt the story of the redoubtable old warrior and his errant and vacillating compatriots, I was impressed by the challenging and unequivocal ring of that statement. One felt that the next words ought to be "and be damned to the lot o' ye"; which indeed they were, in effect

If Joshua had belonged to a certain modern school of thought, he would never have delivered that magnificent harangue about God's mercies and the iniquities of "your fathers which were the other side of the flood," nor its grand climax—"Choose ye, therefore, whom ye will serve." He would have said something to this effect:—"I have formed certain conclusions concerning the nature of the transcendental, which I propose to keep to myself. As for my house and all the rest of you—you can form your own conclusions too, but without the benefit of my experience and my opinions on the subject." In other words—"No, we don't tell them about God; we want them to decide for themselves when they grow up."

How on earth—or in Heaven—can they "decide for themselves," if they never hear anything but the case for the opposition, which is

all that they are likely to hear if the parents do nothing about it?

I consider it of the utmost importance for their sense of security, that children should know exactly where their parents or parent-substitutes stand—though there should be no pressure on the children to take the same stand—and, therefore, in order to make it clear that we attach some importance to religious observances, my wife and I have carried over into the family life of Barns our private family practice of devotional readings in the morning and evening. I need hardly say that attendance is entirely voluntary; it is not the Victorian kind of family prayers where everyone is compulsorily assembled, the servants standing in serried ranks, each according to his station. About half the boys attend, though the numbers vary a good deal. The evening reading was quite early on replaced by the singing of a hymn.

But this in itself creates further difficulties. It stamps me definitely as belonging to the vague general class of those who "believe in God" without saying very much about the God in question, and leaving the boys to assume that my God is the very unpleasant and vindictive tribal deity about whom they have heard from other sources. For I find that so far as our boys have any ideas about God at all, they are of the most primitive nature. They are not only crudely anthropomorphic, which is understandable in children, but God is conceived of, in the main, as an omnipresent, all-seeing monitor, who is setting down all their misdeeds against the day of reckoning. That beautiful image which Jesus used—"Our Father, which art in Heaven"—does not mean to them what it meant to Jesus. Very often it means—such is the nature of some fathers—something so very different that I have had to avoid its use. I often hear boys announcing, with great belligerency, "I dinna believe in God," or "God's all a lot of boloney." It was not the taking of His name in vain that worried me, and I should have been quite happy about it if I had been able to take it at its face value. But it could not be taken at its face value. I knew enough about those boys to realise that it did not mean "I have thought the matter over (or 'I have been convinced by my father's teachings on the subject') and I have arrived at the conclusion that God is a myth." What it meant was that they were terribly frightened of this heathen God they had been brought up to believe in; frightened not only of him, but of pretty well everything else, and in trying to prove to themselves and to others that they were really bold fellows, they said in effect, "*I'm* not frightened—not even of God!" Some of my rationalist friends say that this is a good reason for

"cutting out" religion altogether in such a place as Barns.* It is associated in the boys' minds with fear, which we are trying to exorcise, and if you want to do away with the fear, you'd better kill the bogy-man. But that is just what you cannot do. I do not mean that you cannot kill the bogy-man because you cannot kill God. That is not the point, because this bogy-man which they think of as God is not my God at all, and frankly you can do what you like with Him for all I care. But the point is that the idea of the existence of this bogy-man, God, was implanted in their minds at such an early age (often by no other means than blasphemous references to His name) that it cannot be removed as easily as all that. Far better, and easier—even on strictly rational grounds—admit his existence and say—"but He isn't like *that*—He is love, and all that that implies. It is because of this God that we insist on you having 'your freedom,' and refuse to beat you or knock you about; so He can't be so bad after all"—and perhaps after a while they'll stop being frightened of Him.

So it was necessary to find some means of dissociating myself from the false gods "which were the other side of the flood," and to take the fear out of the primitive theology held by the boys. To do this I started a Sunday morning service, and here I must confess to having made a very serious mistake. A mistake, not in the holding of the service, but in the measures taken concerning attendance. I said it was to be entirely voluntary—and then I did my best to get everyone to attend. It is true that if a boy steadfastly refused to yield to my "moral persuasion" and was prepared to be unpleasant rather than attend—he usually stayed away. But sometimes there *was* unpleasantness, and I have known occasions when I was in such an unchristian state of mind by the time the service was due to start that I have had to say so and dismiss the meeting. So—although that sort of thing was very rare—it was an unhealthy sort of business, rather like the sort of thing one hears spoken of (falsely for all I know) in the Army—"A and B companies will parade at 6.30 sharp for a voluntary lecture." But we had some lively discussions for all that, and sometimes the service was as hectic as the House-meeting. I raised no objection; indeed I welcomed criticism, and sometimes there was plenty of it, though I only remember one occasion when things became so completely disorderly that I had to ring down the curtain before we had reached the end. That, then, was our Sunday service until the Citizens'

* Samuel Butler says in his "Notebooks"—"Theist and Atheist; The fight between them has been whether God shall be called God, or whether he shall have some other name." And, he might have added, between the various kinds of Theists, too!

Association started. Then—as the Citizens' Association was going to be responsible for all activities outside school—I asked them if they were making any arrangements for a Sunday service. They said " No," and made it quite clear that this was not merely due to an oversight. I asked if I might attend a meeting of the Association to give my views on the subject. They said I might, and when I went they listened very politely to all I had to say. Then they went to the length of voting again on a question which had already been decided, with the result that my eloquence was shown to have been useless. There was to be no Sunday service for the Citizens. Of course, there was nothing to prevent my starting a private show of my own for " as many as will," but I thought that would hardly be playing the game. So, having shot my bolt, I just waited to see would would happen next. I did not refer again to Sunday services, either publicly or privately, until three weeks later, and then the subject was not broached by me. The Chairman of the Citizens' Association came to me just as we were finishing breakfast on Sunday morning, and said : " If we have a service, will you take it ? " I grumbled about the short notice, but said I would. I was warned that it would be absolutely voluntary, but most of the boys turned up. I " took " this service, but suggested that in future they should give the speaker a little more notice. In future, however, the service was not " taken " by an adult. A Committee was appointed each week, which chose hymns and readings (with or without adult assistance), appointed readers and a chairman, and invited someone to speak. Usually it was an adult that told the " story," but quite often a boy would do it. And so the service continued until I was instrumental in killing it—or at any rate, until I caused it to lie down after it was dead. Some two years or so after the events I have just described, interest waned. Committee members, appointed to run the service, " forgot " to make the arrangements, or to turn up at the service, so things became very flat indeed. Then some difficulty was experienced in finding boys willing to serve on the Committee, so I suggested one week that as most people didn't seem to want to have a service, it was stupid to insist on trying to appoint a service committee each week, and those who wanted a service should be left to make their own arrangements. That was several weeks ago, and there hasn't been a service since then. But one of these days someone will say, " Why do we no' have a sairvice ? " and it will start up again.

Chapter Nine

EDUCATION

"We can polish him up by and by; and as for learning, he will pick that up as pigeons do peas. So don't hurry him."

Louisa M. Alcott—"Little Men."

Very little that the boys do at Barns may not be called education. When they are "playing about" in the river they are learning to swim; when they are climbing trees, they are developing physical agility and several other qualities besides. I find it almost shocking that this altogether admirable and natural exercise is a *crime* to the city dweller. One boy who was taken from Barns against our advice was returned in a fortnight because—among other things—he had been brought home by an angry park-keeper who had found him climbing trees. What a remarkable civilisation it is in which a boy may not climb a tree!

The educative value of shared responsibility is obvious; but that I have already dealt with. Restricting slightly the use of the word, I propose to devote three chapters to education. In the first I propose to speak of spare time activities, which I think of as the truest education, and one of the most important aspects of our work. In the second I hope to refer to ordinary schooling, and in the third, under the heading of re-education, I shall say something of the educational therapy carried on in the school.

Apart from pure pastimes like "hide and go seek" (as it is quaintly called in Scotland) and those dreadful spontaneous games which seem to consist largely of charging boisterously through the house, yelling wildly, and slamming all the doors as you go, our first spare-time activity—which has continued to be one of the most popular—was woodwork. A small room was furnished with a couple of old benches and some tools, and the boys were invited to use it on certain occasions when I could be present. It has never been thought of as a "class." I am only there to see that chisels are not used as screw-drivers or missiles, and that planes are not used to shave off the heads of nails. I may also—so far as I am able—give a little advice when asked.

I went to woodwork myself as a Council School boy. For years I had looked forward to the time when, proudly wearing my woodwork apron, I should be old enough to go to "manual," and at the age of eleven or so I started. I went once or twice a week for about eighteen months, and learnt only one thing—that I was

"no good at it"—which was false. I was told to plane a piece of wood until it was "square," and it was explained to me that as long as a crack of light could be seen between the try-square and the wood, it would not do. I took the instructor at his word, and I do not remember that I ever did anything else but try to remove this crack of light from successive pieces of wood. Twenty years later I started again with "Bunny" Barron, at Hawkspur Camp, where I learned that to get a piece of wood absolutely square as I had struggled to do at school, requires the skill that comes from years of practice and (equally astonishing !) that the correct way to hold a tool was the way that comes most naturally to you—provided it is a way unlikely to damage you, the tool, or your neighbours. Under Bunny's tuition I made great progress because in the usual sense of the word it was not tuition at all. One got on with the job, and if one got into difficulties Bunny was there to help one out. In eighteen days I acquired more skill and confidence in the use of tools than I acquired in eighteen months as a boy under tuition.

So that is the method we use at Barns. We are not out to make carpenters ; we are only out to make self-confident and self-reliant men. Most of the boys who come to Barns have, to a greater or lesser degree, a sense of inadequacy and failure. One of our most important jobs is to replace that feeling with one of achievement and self-confidence. A boy who can handle a joiner's tools with familiarity and ease is on the way to developing such a sense—and he may even become "pretty good at it" in the process. So if you go to woodwork at Barns you make what you like, any way you like, and if you like you can ask Wills for advice.

Most boys begin by making a sword. It is easy to make and useful to play with. (The horror of those woodwork classes where only "useful" things like egg-stands and pipe-racks are made ! To a child only those things are useful (broadly speaking) that can be *used* in play.) You just get a short bit of wood and nail it across a longer bit. The only snag is that if you ask Wills to lend you his knife to sharpen the end the old so-and-so will say, in his grumpy way, "Why borrow my knife when there's a row of perfectly good chisels in front of you ?" In due course (sometimes I warn them of this, sometimes I don't bother) the cross piece will come off, and that is the time to say, "It will stay on better if you joint it. But if you want to be chump enough to waste another nail on it you can"—then one can show how the halved joint is made. There are several books knocking around in the woodwork shop with ideas for making things—toy engines and motors (we made a fleet of them and, at the suggestion of one of the boys sent them

down to the evacuated nursery school) dolls' cots, and so forth. In December woodwork will be full of boys, making Christmas presents for their brothers and sisters, often starting on them much too late to have any hope of finishing them in time. But if they are done in time, I can imagine them almost bursting with pride as they hand them over—"I made it masel'." There could be no better medicine for a boy who feels that his life, up to now, has been a bit of a flop. I shall shew in chapter eleven how woodwork kept Sammy Johnson from utter frustration until Ben could give him a sense of achievement in other spheres.

Generally speaking, if a job is done well enough for the boy, it is good enough for me, but I do sometimes encourage a boy who can do good work to acquire a sense of craftsmanship, and might even in such a case forbid him to take it from the shop until it was done in a way that we both recognise as "properly." But those occasions are rare.

That is not the whole of woodwork, however. There are the jobs that we do between us, for common use. In 1940–41 was first created that Barns Institution, "The Barry"—what Scouts would call a trek cart. We worked on it throughout the winter, and Ernest Ludlam got us some old motor-bike wheels, had them fixed on an iron frame, and the "barry" was done. Each successive winter or spring we took it to pieces and re-built it, usually because it had broken, owing to some defect in the structure—and there were often running repairs at camp, too—until by 1944 we had a really substantial article which, although rather heavy, did at least carry our goods to camp without giving way under the strain. The parallel bars, the various diving boards and rafts, have all been communal efforts, and as much satisfaction has been found in their making as in their use. Then there are jobs about the house. For many jobs of course we have to call in professional help, but many others are done by myself or one of my colleagues, assisted by a small gang of boys—broken tables, beds and chairs, door knobs, electric light switches, and so on, without number, have been mended in this way. There are very few boys who are not in a position to say, after a year or so, "*I* helped Willsy to mend that"—or, with even greater pride—"*I* mended that." I enjoy "fiddling about" with tools, but I should no more think of doing a small repair job by myself than Ben would think of teaching an empty class-room. I should feel that I was wasting my time.

The value of keeping a free-and-easy, spontaneous atmosphere in all spare-time activities was never more clearly shown than in our experience with gardening. Gardening started quite

spontaneously, and at first was not even encouraged, because we were making plans for getting a piece of land ploughed up for this purpose later on. But the boys started digging up tiny little bits of the playing field, in the most disorderly and untidy way, and calling them gardens. As the playing field was quite useless, anyway, as a playing field, we said nothing about this, and as there was no damping the boys' enthusiasm we helped them, after a time, with seeds and advice when they asked for it. There were some twenty or so of these plots—some of them not more than a yard and a half square—but the enthusiasm was terrific, and was sustained from the spring well on into the winter. The following spring we tried to encourage those who wanted to do gardening to have their plots on the piece of land we had set aside for that purpose which—with a very bad grace—they did. But gardens were still scattered about without any kind of order or design, and the place was very untidy, though enthusiasm was still fairly high. The next spring I anticipated them by marking out with great care, several rows of neat square plots, and said, " anyone who wants a garden can have one of these." It practically killed all interest in gardening, and we have had to revert to the old untidiness, but we have never managed to recapture that first fine careless rapture.

There is one activity, however, in which interest never wanes and which is of tremendous value as an outlet for the emotions, as an expression of the fantasy-life and as an opportunity to do something creative. Here again—as with woodwork—the value is in the *doing* and not in the thing done. At painting we are not trying to make artists—but happy children, and thus satisfactory adults.

There are three kinds of painting activity, The first is imaginative painting in watercolours. Pots of brightly-coloured paint are placed down the middle of the tables, and those who want to paint (generally more than can be provided for) are given paper and brush and told to go ahead.* The enthusiasm and energy that go into this sedentary occupation are really astonishing.

A large number of the painters—whether consciously or not I am never sure—carry on a running commentary on their work all the time they are at it. " This is a giant and he's got a big stick in his hand. It's not a stick really it's a tree that he's pulled up " (on go the boughs and roots). " Here comes another giant, and this giant biffs him on the head with his stick—BONK " . . . Half-

* I find that this is much the same as the method used by Mrs. Marie Paneth at her " Branch Street " club. " Branch Street " is a most fascinating book (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.) the more so to me as it describes exactly the type of child that comes to Barns—though Mrs. Paneth's children were Londoners.

a-dozen boys might be chattering away like this, quite oblivious to everything and everyone except the world they are creating. It is fascinating to watch the imagination growing; or to be more accurate, to watch the boys overcome their fear of giving it free expression. When Harry Bryant started, he would paint nothing but a witch's house, sometimes with and sometimes without, the witch flying over it on her broomstick. This went on for some weeks, until he had, so to speak, completely painted the old witch out of his system. He had been a frightened, furtive, vicious-tempered little boy, but now he began to learn how to smile. He started on a richly varied series of paintings of many kinds of subject—fairy stories, imaginary landscapes, historical scenes, stories that he "made up," houses, palaces, gardens, Barns episodes—and all with a vigour and clarity of line that was most effective. Presently—that is after a year or so—we found him drawing with a brush rather than painting, a series of types of person, each with appropriate headgear and background—a cowboy, a gangster, a Trojan, a Norman, a King, a beggar, and so on. There was one to which he gave no name, but which we have decided must be intended to represent a decadent of the nineties! He also did a portrait sketch of me which, though far from flattering as a likeness, has much to recommend it as a picture. My background consists of a row of bookshelves on one side carrying a vase he remembers having seen in my sitting room; and on the other a picture which he also remembers having seen there. He was not more than ten at this time.

This kind of painting is an interesting measure, too, of the degree to which an emotional conflict is getting straightened out, as well as having itself a useful cathartic value. Ginger Bright, who had been brought up by his Grannie, had an intense and openly expressed hatred of his mother. He had remarkable fantasies about killing her and these were mixed up in an extraordinary way with fantasies about Jesus on the Cross. His early paintings beggar description, both as to design and as to colour. They are an indescribable jumble of crosses, knives, daggers explosions, bombs, aeroplanes, all in the most lurid or the most sickly of colours. Week after week these dreadful monstrosities were produced but very slowly, as Ginger began to get rid of some of his resentment—in paint and in the many other ways provided at Barns—his paintings gradually began to be slightly more coherent in design and less horrific in content. Gordon Steel was a boy who had been separated from his parents at a very early age, and little was known about them except that they were highly

undesirable. Gordon himself was very backward intellectually (I.Q. 73) and seemed at times almost unteachable. But he had a rich and vivid imagination, and a sure hand with the paint-brush. Some of his queens and princes and fairy kings (very popular subjects with these deprived children) were a delight to the eye. He never referred to his mother, but used to invent wonderful tales about his father, sometimes saying that he was dead and describing the heroic manner of his demise ; sometimes explaining that he was abroad, and telling wonderful tales of his exploits there. He had a strong sense of deprivation over this matter of having no parents to write to or to be visited by—but rarely mentioned his mother. One day he painted a large and horrible-looking face with tears streaming down it. He explained that it was a boy crying, because he had seen his mother !

In all this the rôle of the adult (usually my wife) is similar to mine at woodwork—to discourage the application of paint to other surfaces than that of the paper, and occasionally to give advice if asked. But less advice is given here than at woodwork. Ruth will never give in to a request to " tell us what to paint," and only in very exceptional circumstances will she give technical advice. To give advice is to imply that a child might be right who, from fear or from ignorance, says " I can't paint," and of course, such a child never *is* right. Any young child, unless discouraged by stupid adult teaching, can express himself in paint. But it must be borne in mind that young children's paintings are entirely different from those of older children or of adults, and are to be judged by entirely different standards. A child will be perfectly satisfied with something which may look to you and me like nothing on earth, and I presume this to be, because the child does not yet very clearly distinguish between what he has put on the paper and what he sees in his mind's eye. When he looks at the paper he is also looking at the mental picture he had formed and I expect that, taken together, they make a very satisfying sight. This does not prevent some young children from displaying a very good sense of design, of rhythm and of form, if only they are not interfered with by fussy adults trying to " teach " them.

But there does come a time when they need to be taught. The sort of paintings I have been speaking of are done in the main by the younger boys. As they get older they begin to separate the image from the picture ; they begin to criticise their work ; they want to know about perspective and other technical things—they want to paint a picture and not merely to express a fantasy. The age at which this stage is reached varies enormously in different

children, but one of the most unfailing signs of its approach is when the child begins to join land and sky in an horizon. The young child (very logically, as it seems to me) bounds his picture not only round the sides, but at the back also. His painting does not go as far back as the horizon, so there is a gap of white paper between earth and sky. One day (and Ruth always feels it to be rather a sad day) he will produce a picture where the muddy brown of the earth meets the rich blue of the sky across the middle of the background—and you know he is beginning to grow up.

Then Ruth starts him on oils, and here we have to acknowledge our great indebtedness to our own teacher. Arthur Segal died only this year, and though, happily, his work is being carried on by his daughter, his death was felt as a very real loss to all who had worked with him. Here again, with Arthur Segal, I learned as a man what they had failed to teach me at school—that it is possible even for me to paint! "Everyone," said Segal "can learn to paint," and if you looked incredulous (as I did) he would add in his somewhat explosive English (for he was a Roumanian and never became a fluent English speaker) "I zhall zhow you." Ruth and I took him at his word when he said that, and when war circumstances brought us to within twenty miles of his studio we took to spending our weekly day off there. We had considered ourselves—as so many do—congenitally incapable of painting a picture, and our going to Segal was rather in the nature of a challenge. We had seen him do remarkable things with other people, but had always said—as perhaps some of my readers may now be saying, "But *he* couldn't have been as bad as *us*." We were simply astonished and I, at least, was filled for a time with a wild enthusiasm at what we found ourselves able to do after half-a-dozen lessons. Unfortunately (from that point of view), we moved North after a couple of months, so tuition stopped. Unless one is Winston Churchill, one cannot do everything so, Segal's point having been demonstrated, I let painting drop, but Ruth kept it up so far as her busy life has allowed. I cannot describe nor expound Segal's method—a description of a method is bound to be more or less a comparison with other methods, and I know no other method. I cannot say how I started learning to paint any more than I could say how I started learning to talk, and I don't think Ruth can either—except that the method is based on the fundamental assumption that of course, everyone can learn to paint.* And it is obvious that, consciously or not, when Ruth

* See also the quite independent, but really astonishing work done among epileptic children by my friend, Charles Handley Read, and described by him in "The Studio," March, 1944.

starts teaching she will reproduce the methods that were used so successfully on her. Not with the same skill, nor the same background of knowledge, nor with the same consciousness of direction; but the general approach will be the Segal approach.

Here there is one extremely important point to be noted. You do not need to be a brilliant artist yourself in order to get other people—children at any rate—to paint. The principal qualifications are enthusiasm and a conviction that there is no-one who cannot learn. I am glad to have had this view confirmed by someone who knows much more about it than I can ever hope to know. Since I started writing this book, Mr. Herbert Read has published his " Education through Art," which no-one should miss who is interested in education or in art. I did not find it an easy book to read, and it is not cheap, but I am glad to have spared both the effort and the money! In preparing this book, Mr. Read apparently visited a large number of schools and one of the things that impressed him (p. 288) is that the best work does not necessarily come from the schools that are best equipped with materials or with technical qualifications. The best work is the result of a relationship between teacher and pupil that is quite independent of these things.

So oil painting (" taken " by Ruth) has been the second form of painting, with very interesting and encouraging results. The boys are very keen to do portraits, so Ruth puts them on what is probably the most difficult, but certainly the most interesting form of portraiture—they paint themselves. To this they bring great enthusiasm, industry and concentration, and there is one very important and interesting thing I have noticed about the results, namely, that however bad a likeness a boy may paint, he always manages somehow to reproduce—sometimes in a most striking way—a face that displays some of the salient features of his character, or of his mood at the time. So marked has this been that I have thought it worth while to reproduce some of these paintings to help the reader to form an impression of the sort of person about whom I am writing. Although they are excellent character studies they are very poor likenesses, and cannot be recognised by friends and relations!

Not that oil painting consists, by any means, merely of self-portraits. There is the usual range of subjects, some indoor and some outdoor; usually chosen by Ruth, but sometimes chosen by the boy himself. Sometimes a boy who was not very successful in watercolours will do well in oils, because oil-painting is much more disciplined than the other kind, and he may feel the need of discipline; and of course, conversely. Though there are some

happy people who are naturally deft, and these will shine in either form. Some of these clever people I find extremely irritating. Ian Burns was such a one. His I.Q. was 77, but he was singularly clever with his hands. He could come to woodwork and handle all the tools as if he had had years of experience. The first time he came to oil-painting he painted as if he had been at it for years. His products at hand-work and clay modelling are superior to most people's. And does all this mean anything to Ian? Not a bit. One might have been forgiven for hoping that this was one of those cases (by no means as frequent as is often supposed) where intellectual inadequacy is compensated by manual dexterity, but it is not. The lack of intelligence is there, the skilful fingers are there; but the one by no means compensates the other, because he seems quite unaware that his work is good. Indeed he does not often take part in any of these activities except by persuasion—they just mean nothing to him at all, and what the answer to that is, I have not yet discovered.

As a half-way house between the two forms of painting I have referred to we have experimented a little with the method of Cizek which is described in Viola's book, "Child Art." The children are told a story and are then asked to paint it. I have not yet found this to have valuable results, but it is only in its early days as I write.

It is impossible of course, to deal with all the various occupations that go on at Barns at the same length as I have dealt with those to which I have already referred. Nor is it necessary to do so, for the general atmosphere that I have tried to describe is the same whatever is being done, the general method does not vary greatly according to the subject. The first essential is the spirit of freedom about it all—you can please yourself whether you go or not, and when you get there you can please yourself within certain limits what you do. Then there is the sense of achievement, which in some cases needs no encouragement, but which in others needs to be induced by means of praise. I have heard people whose attitude is much the same as my own say that they never give anything *but* praise. I think that is going rather far, but it is essential that nearly everything should be praised for something or other. A child who already has a tendency to feel inferior will easily convince himself that his work is poor, but will greedily lap up praise (though sometimes seeming to spurn it) and by it be encouraged to do something else and earn more praise—all the time adding to his skill and confidence and lessening his sense of inferiority. Praise is essential, and so is enthusiasm in the teacher. An ounce of enthusiasm is worth a ton of technical knowledge, and that is not hyperbole; it is not even



Daniel Goff
Self portrait



ARTHUR COLLINS
Self portrait

exaggeration. Where there is enthusiasm and ignorance, teacher and boys can learn together. Where the teacher has knowledge but no enthusiasm little that is worth learning will be taught. Indeed if it were possible, which, of course it is not, I think it would be an excellent thing if the teacher could start each term as ignorant or almost as ignorant as his pupils, in the subject he is to teach. The first winter he was at Barns, Ben had most of the staff playing recorders, and the boys were encouraged to make bamboo pipes, which they then painted and learned to play. Squeaking and whistling were to be heard in all parts of the house at all times of the day and night, and it was difficult to judge whether the boys or adults were the more excited about it all. Some of the boys even saved up their coppers and bought themselves recorders. The staff practised assiduously every night after supper, some items for the Christmas concert, but when we solemnly took our places on the stage and raised our flutes to our lips, the audience thought it excruciatingly funny. We had barely finished the first of our pieces when Bobby Dodd cried out, " You lot get down now, and let us have a go " !

The percussion band, too, was very popular, though I found that this was a case where the teacher really does need to know more than the pupils. I discovered that when I tried to " take " percussion !

Clay modelling, too, has been a very useful activity, having much the same value as painting, and into which a tremendous amount of energy goes. Then we have done weaving, soft-toy making, making chess-men out of old cotton reels, lino-cutting and printing—and so on and so on and so on.

These are all activities in which the children *do* something, and it is very desirable that most of a child's programme, should involve him in some form of activity. But many of them have passive corollaries. The keen painters may sometimes be found in my sitting-room looking—under Ruth's guidance—through our books of reproductions of paintings. Sometimes there are gramophone recitals, and it is sheer nonsense to say that children do not like good music. Much depends upon how it is presented to them. Most of our gramophone recitals take place when the boys are in bed, during that useful period between going to bed and going to sleep. Sometimes a story will be told or read, sometimes there is some poetry, sometimes there is nothing, and sometimes there is wireless or a gramophone recital. It is well known that children tend to be rather conservative, and those who have never heard anything but dance music prefer to stick to what they know. The

answer to that is to get them to know something else, and the chances are that they will like that as well. So I get them into bed (or the Officer on Duty gets them into bed, to be precise) and with a great show of enthusiasm promise them a great treat—the Concerto Grosso of Handel, or a Beethoven Quartet. The boys with no experience of this kind of music will emit mock groans, but others will be quite glad to lie in bed and listen. I might say a few words about the music or about the composer while I am winding up the gramophone. Bach's large family is a never failing source of interest. For one reason or another we have not been doing so much of that lately (at least I haven't—though they may have been getting it from someone else) but when I was doing more of it we reached a stage where pieces would be asked for by name. The third Brandenburg was a very popular choice, and they loved to wind up with a two piano version of "Sheep may safely graze." There is much excitement when, as sometimes happens, "our" music is heard on the wireless.*

And much the same applies to poetry—there is no need to dwell on it—if it is presented by someone who is enthusiastic about it he will communicate his enthusiasm. If it is presented by a stale teacher who regards it as just another subject, no good will be done to anyone.

All this sort of thing (and there is much more of it than I have mentioned; I have not referred to play-acting, to camping, to nature-lore, to mention three important things) is the real education, and that is why I have called the next chapter "Schooling." The acquisition of and drilling in mere technical skill—in reading and writing and counting, are of course, essential preliminaries; but they are not education.

* Not that we deprive them of their "swing" music; God forbid. It has its place, but is not allowed to exceed that place.

Chapter Ten

SCHOOLING

" Meditating on the Situation of Schools in our Provinces, my Mind hath, a times, been affected with Sorrow."

John Woolman—Writings.

One Thursday in November, 1942, there was great excitement at Barns. A few weeks previously I had asked His Majesty's Inspector of Schools to pay us a visit as he had not been since, two years before, he had told me that we were a case for " the larger charity " ; and here he was.

It was Ben's day off, which meant that his group—the older boys—were working in their room entirely unattended, though it is true that the Head and *his* group were next door. I had a talk with the H.M.I. (wondering furiously what was going on in Ben's room !) and then directed him to the school hut. Then I returned to my own room to await his return. He was away for well over an hour, and when he came back he told me something of what had happened. They were (I was relieved and perhaps a little surprised to hear) all working away industriously, and he gathered them round the fire for a chat. He asked them what sort of things they did, looked at their books, and then talked to them about themselves (" I am sorry not to have seen Mr. Stoddard, but it was obvious to me that some very good work was being done there"). To Frankie Fox he said, " I remember you from the last time I came. You and some more boys were in a room with Mr. Wills writing a letter to your mothers about your having run away a few days previously. Do you ever run away now ? " " Oh, no ! " said Frankie promptly, " we always ask Mr. Wills if we want to go home now." This was a lie, because Frankie was still apt to take French leave occasionally, and I told the H.M.I. so. I did this, not so much because I did not want the inspector to be deceived, as because I thought Frankie's loyalty was a more useful argument in our favour than Frankie's apparent probity. He wouldn't, two years earlier, have told a lie just in order to give an inspector a good impression of Barns School. And thereby hangs a long and, I hope, an interesting tale. The change in Frankie's attitude to school—and of all the other boys, for that matter—was almost entirely the work of Ben, than whom no man ever had a more

loyal, a more enthusiastic, or a more tireless colleague. He wrote a good deal of what follows, and where quotation marks are used with no explanation, I am quoting from a long paper he wrote at my request.

Before proceeding with the story, however, I must make one thing clear. If I had my way, attendance at classes in such a place as Barns would, I think, be voluntary. As I do not have my way there is no need to dwell at length on that—I merely mention it to explain what might seem an inconsistency. Barns is an Evacuation Hostel, and its inmates live there by reason of their being pupils at an L.E.A. school. Voluntary classes would mean a large number of noughts in the register during the early days of a boy's school career, and it is very doubtful whether the authority would be satisfied with the explanation that lessons are voluntary. Indeed, in so far as I am *in loco parentis* and " my " children are pupils at an L.E.A. school, I have (apparently) a statutory obligation to see that they attend. We have never attempted to escape this obligation in its entirety, because we were already asking the authorities to stomach rather a good deal, and we did not want to seem too impossibly cranky. So we have just said to the boys that whether we or they like it or not, the law compels them to go to school.

Having made that point clear, we may proceed to a little history. When Barns started we had one teacher, appointed by the Edinburgh Education Authority. We have called him Teacher, or the Head teacher, because we cannot tell the tale without bringing him in, and we cannot bring him in without causing the sympathetic reader (if there be one) to regard him somewhat unfavourably. This is not because he is an incompetent or an unsuccessful teacher ; he is neither of those. His only failing would by many be considered a virtue—he did not wholly share our point of view. And as I am necessarily writing from our point of view . . . but I will stress this no further. As soon as I heard that he had been appointed I wrote to the L.E.A. and told them that in spite of his obvious good qualities I feared he would in time find the atmosphere here unhelpful, and would complain that the methods adopted by the rest of us made the maintenance of discipline in school difficult or impossible. Which, in fact, he did at the end of the first term.

I have already told how his visit to the Education Office brought us a visit of a sub-committee of the Education Authority ; but it brought us other things as well. It brought us the strap—the belt, as they call it in Scotland. The teacher had, hitherto, tried to avoid the use of corporal punishment in school, but after his visit to the

Education Office he gave up the attempt. I did not, and do not, feel that I could blame him. He had thirty unruly boys to teach, whose mental ages ranged from about six to about 14, whose unruliness was undoubtedly, during that trying first term, exacerbated by the way we treated them out of school hours. And the very fact that our outlook was different, made it difficult for the rest of us in our limited free time—to lend him a hand, quite apart from the fact that he did not feel easy about making use of unqualified assistants in work which was primarily his responsibility.

However, the time came when we were able to provide him with more material help than an odd hour or two, now and then. In the summer of 1941 Kenneth Roberton, our first sub-warden, left us to take a joint appointment with his wife. Kenneth was a great loss to us, and his outlook was so similar to my own that his presence in the first few difficult months immensely lightened my own load. But by the time he left, things had become much less difficult, and we, therefore, decided that his successor should be a qualified teacher, devoting half his time to teaching, and the other half to helping in the supervision of the boys out of school hours. The L.E.A. agreed to this appointment of a half-time teacher, and in October, 1941, with their approval, we appointed Mr. Benjamin Stoddard, B.A., a young man who had been dismissed from his first teaching post because he was a conscientious objector. Ben, like myself, is an integral pacifist. That is to say, his pacifism is not merely a reluctance to be a soldier, but is an attitude to life. He had been given unconditional exemption from military service under the first conscription act, before the war started. He therefore, had no difficulty in adapting himself to the Barns way of doing things, but the fact that he was serving two masters—Teacher and me—did not make things any easier for him. He was given a group of the younger boys to teach in the mornings, and from the first tried to avoid the use of an authoritarian attitude—with difficulties that can easily be imagined. But the birth of the Citizens' Association early in 1942 changed all that.

I have told of the birth of the Citizens' Association in Chapter Five, and on page 54 I referred (in a letter to our Chairman) to " an interesting bit of backwash " in the school. In short, a little rebellion took place. It started with truanting, and the ringleaders seemed to be the very boys who had been largely responsible for the formation of the Citizens' Association. I was at first—until I grasped its import—perturbed by this, and at dinner-time one day began to harangue them. They said they were having a rebellion. " Are you rebelling against me ? " I asked. No, they were not. " Against

the adults generally then?" No, not against them. They were rebelling against the Teacher. "But my dear fools," I said (or words to that effect) "In the eyes of the law I am the person responsible for seeing that you go to school, so you are rebelling against me. In so far as I have shared that responsibility with the Citizens' Association, you're rebelling against yourselves as well. If the Teacher wanted to be unpleasant he could go to the authorities and say, 'Things have come to such a pretty pass at Barns now that they can't even get the boys to school,' and I don't see what good that would do anyone—though I do not for one moment imagine that he *would* be so unpleasant." But whatever the Teacher's attitude might be, the fact remained that in the eyes of the law I, and I alone, was responsible for getting them to school, and rebellion that took the form of truanting was therefore a rebellion against me. There was silence for a moment or two while this fact sunk in, then Frankie Fox enquired, with a wicked little twinkle, "Is it anything to do with you what happens when we get to school?" I said that I was naturally interested in their schooling, but technically it was outside my province. After that they went to school, and though some of them may have absented themselves after having once got there, others remained in school to make themselves as unpleasant as they could to the Teacher.

I need hardly say that in this they received no encouragement o any kind from me or any of my colleagues, but I should be worse than a hypocrite if I pretended that the boys did not realise that we sympathised with their end, whatever we may have thought about their means. Teacher did not hesitate to use his strap, but he quickly realised that this was something more than passing insubordination, and that it would take a good deal of strapping to quell it. I am sure he could have quelled it if he had laid on often enough and heavily enough, but it is to his credit that he saw the futility of that, and came for a talk with me about it. I told him quite frankly that I thought the new regime in the house was largely responsible for the trouble he was having in school, and Ben and he and I, and Mrs. Smith who happened to be visiting, had a discussion about the whole thing. The upshot of it was that the older boys—about ten of them—were handed entirely over to Ben. Officially, Ben was only a teacher in the mornings, took his free time in the afternoons, and returned to duty in the evenings. This meant that the rest of us had to teach his class for the short afternoon session. We gave them woodwork, poetry, painting, handwork and what-not—in short we undertook to keep them constructively occupied. The idea was that this group should be

entirely shut off from the rest, and should be brought within the ambit of Shared Responsibility. The position would be, in effect, that the Citizens' Association would run its own little school, with Ben and the rest of us as teachers.

Thus it came about that on Monday, 16th February, 1942, we began—after eighteen months—to bring the school into line with the house. It was an exciting time, but we were not by any means jubilant. Ben says "Of the first morning's school I remember chiefly a sense of dismal failure and an almost overwhelming feeling that circumstances were going to be too much for us." "The Citizens made themselves responsible for discipline in the school as they had in the house, but not at first with the same success. An Officer on Duty was elected by the Citizens (changing daily) to maintain order in the group. If necessary he was to bring charges for disorder or non-completion of work, before the Committee which met daily." It didn't seem very successful at first. They were all generally retarded educationally, most of them with specific backwardness in one or more of the basic subjects. They must all have spent several years at school frustrated, neglected, always at the tail end, attempting work which was too difficult and in which they could take no interest. Small wonder that they seized their first opportunity to work off some of their resentment against the institution associated with their unhappy experiences.

"In the absence of imposed discipline therefore, they assumed that they were free to do as little as they liked, and were unwilling to organise themselves or discipline those who came in late or refused to do their work. The crux of the matter was that these boys were not convinced when we said 'Your group is not like ordinary school. If you do your work, it will not be because you are bullied into it, but because you are interested in it and want to get on.'" For, of course, they were *not* interested, and they soon made that plain. But Ben had the answer, as will be seen. "I believe that in those early days our sincerity and conviction were on trial. Situations arose every day which put to the test our decision to refrain from all coercive discipline. The boys were trying to find out just how far they could go; they were seeking to prove whether we meant what we said or not." They had proved that we meant it in the House, but that was a different matter. Living in an Institution was a new thing to most of them, so they were prepared to find new ways. But School they knew all about. School is a place, as they knew from experience, where you do as you're told, do it smartly, and no back answers. School is a place where a man (or woman) armed with a strap compels you to do meaningless

things for no apparent reason. This thing here is called school, so it must really be the same as all the others. "From daily refusals to do work, daily complaints that they were bored, daily requests for something more interesting and of more use when they left school, it was clear to me that both curriculum and teaching methods would have to be adapted to the new situation. Fortunately, the practical activities provided by the rest of the staff in the afternoons were greatly appreciated by the boys and kept the scheme going for the first few days. After a time I was able to give the schoolwork a more practical bias, insisting continually on the everyday usefulness of the things we learned. We counted money, did shopping sums, calculated wages; we measured tables, windows, rooms and made plans to scale of all kinds of familiar objects. We wrote letters, read exciting stories, acted plays, talked about things we had done or hoped to do. A good deal of field work in nature study was done," much of the instruction being given by Frankie Fox, who knew more about birds and beasts and their habits than the rest of Barns put together, men, women and children, "and we discovered a wealth of wild flowers and river and wood life. The Committee of Management arranged excursions to historic Edinburgh and these did much to associate the new schooling with happy and interesting life as distinct from the unrelated perplexities which had hitherto aroused so much antagonism.

"One or two of the older boys began to ask me for individual work in their weak subjects, so that when they left school they would at least be able to meet ordinary situations. I, therefore, gave them assignments in those subjects, at which they could work, not only in the official school hours but at other times as well. Out of this arose a modified form of the sub-Dalton Plan, by which there were weekly assignments in each subject, and freedom to arrange work according to individual needs. A balanced minimum of work was required and a weekly meeting of the group was held—sometimes attended by David Wills—at which each week's work was considered. A report of this meeting was presented to the Citizens' Association and any necessary action was decided on then. If, for example, a boy still had work to finish, this was discussed at the class meeting, and reported to the Association," which may or may not instruct him to finish it over the week-end. Usually they were told to finish it, and usually they did.

Ben had his day off on Thursdays, and on those days I used to attend school to answer questions and advise or help as necessary. I was not there as teacher, much less as disciplinarian. Even so, they

resented my presence after a time, and had me removed. This simple thing made a big difference—they were really convinced that we were in earnest, a better spirit prevailed, and Thursday mornings passed—very often—industriously and quietly. It was to this group, on such a Thursday, that the Inspector came, as recounted at the beginning of this chapter.

The Citizens' Association never managed this group as well as it did the rest of the house, partly because it was just a group, with the contradiction of the rest of the school still there, but outside its jurisdiction. Not every boy appreciated freedom from repressive discipline, for there is quite a good deal of superficial security to be found in it, and some boys are quite at a loss when it is removed. But it is probably true to say that whatever serenity and purposefulness was achieved was largely due to the new satisfaction the boys were finding in their work.

So school continued until the end of that year (1942) when the Head teacher left. At last the period of divided loyalties and conflicting methods was ended, and the change in the atmosphere —especially in school—was all that we had hoped.

But it was a tough time for Ben, because for the first five months he was single-handed in the school. He very wisely refused from the start to attempt to teach all the boys at once, and the L.E.A. sanctioned, as a temporary measure, the "half-time" school for which, in 1940, permission had been refused. To the teacher accustomed to teaching 30, 40 or even 50 children at once (if teaching be the right word for it), 30 may not seem an impossibly large number for a class. But the mental ages of our boys ranged now from 6 to 16, quite apart from the fact that they were at Barns because they were "difficult." Schoolwork was therefore, divided into two kinds—basic subjects and the rest. Ben looked after the basic subjects by taking the boys in two shifts of three hours each, morning and afternoon. This was all the official schooling there was, and nothing else was called "school" in talking to the boys. But we also provided a very wide range of "non basic" subjects at all hours of the day and evening, including week-ends, for any who were not in school. We all took a hand in this—cooks, cleaners, House-matron, as well as Ruth and I—even Ben found time to make a contribution to this side of the work, in addition to his six hours a day solid teaching. It meant that Ben and I had practically no "time off" (apart from our weekly day, which we never surrender) for nearly five months, but we both felt it to be well worth-while. The participation of the boys in this non-academic work was absolutely voluntary. There was no

pressure to attend, but the classes were offered rather as a privilege than as a duty, and they were very well attended. We had the ambitious aim of having each boy attending classes voluntarily for ten hours in the week, thus making up the ten of which he was being deprived by "half-time school," but in this we were not quite successful. It would have been rather surprising if we had been, because we normally limited the classes to six boys, and all the classes had to be done in the free time of the adult in charge, or while he was doing something else. Nevertheless, several boys exceeded the ten hours we hoped for, and the average for the 30 boys was between 7 and 8 hours each week. Of course, education cannot be reckoned in hours, but we wanted to convince the official mind (if necessary) that very little was being lost as a result of "half-time school."

We had been prepared for another increment of disorder when the last shackles of imposed discipline were removed but, although some boys were unsettled and were manifestly pining for the heavy hand, Ben's unfailing patience and the influence of the steadier boys kept it within much smaller limits than we had been prepared for. There was a little truanting, some fooling in the class-room, and that sort of thing. But anything which interfered with the smooth working of the school was reported by the Officer on Duty to the Committee, and dealt with by the pressure of public opinion, which was definitely against disorder. They wanted to see "our school" succeeding. And in spite of many difficulties which even then had not been foreseen—succeed it did.

Chapter Eleven

RE-EDUCATION

" Suaviter in modo ; fortiter in re."
Quoted (too often) by Lord Chesterfield to his long-suffering son.

Gordon Steel was an enthusiastic painter. Every time there was painting, Gordon was there, and we often had difficulty in dragging him away from his paint-pots when it was bed-time. One day—for a reason I do not remember—Ruth took painting during school hours, instead of during the evening. "Is this school ? " asked Gordon. He was told that it was school. " Oh, well, I shall choose something easy to paint, so's I can get out early ! "

This beautifully illustrates the general attitude to school when Ben took it over, and which he set himself to reverse. First the reasons for it had to be found. One had already been found and dealt with—the system of repressive discipline under which most schools are run. If this is good for any boy—which I deny—it is certainly not good for Barns boys, so it was done away with and the School, as I have shewn, was brought within the range of Shared Responsibility.

This did not produce any magical change because the prejudice against school and the pre-conceived idea of a teacher as a man with a strap are so deeply embedded. If you watch any group of children playing at school, you will find that it consists very largely of the " teacher " administering corporal punishment to the children. What a tribute to the teaching profession !

But very gradually a change was brought about. A year after Ben took over he happened to refer to himself as the teacher, and received the retort from one of the smaller boys, " Garn—you're no' a teacher ; you're just a man " ! What a tribute to Ben ! The Teacher had come down off his pedestal and had become a human being.

I do not suggest that the abolition of repressive discipline will of itself do away with the antipathy to school, but it is a much more important thing than many people realise. It is difficult to learn anything from a person whom you dislike or of whom you are frightened ; learning from those we love is a pleasure. I know that your ordinary disciplinarian will say that his boys do not dislike

him, and of course a boy has his degrees of likes and dislikes even among the disciplinarians of his environment. But in general it is the kind, affectionate teacher, rather than the stern and unbending disciplinarian who is liked by his pupils; and it is *that* kind of teacher who, other things being equal, will get the most work out of his children. During my own short school career, I was top of each succeeding class until I entered the class of a teacher with a very bad reputation, of whom I was terrified, when I sank quickly down to the middle. Even though all children may not re-act as violently as I did, it is obvious that such a teacher is not getting the best out of his class—yet the fools think they are efficient because "you can hear a pin drop" in their class-rooms. This confusing of good discipline with good teaching has gone on too long, and it is surely time it was done away with. So great is the prejudice against a little noise in the class-room that even Ben has sometimes wondered whether our class-rooms were not too noisy for good work to be going on. When he had examined the statistical evidence of the first year's work he wondered no more. But I anticipate.

It is true of course that a boy—unless there is something wrong with him—admires virility, and that is often particularly true of the sort of boy who comes to Barns. The trouble is that most of them have been brought up to regard physical violence as the highest manifestation of this masculine quality, which sometimes causes them to *admire* even a man who knocks them about, and of course they will seek to emulate him. It is our job to provide them with a different standard.

They will hate school then because of the way it is conducted. A child is a bundle of energy, and his school work should involve him in as much activity as possible. Activity moreover, that is designed to give him a sense of achievement, to make him feel that he is *doing* something that means something. The dull daily round of mechanical processes stimulates no interest, gives no sense of achievement, and produces boredom and worse. Then they get behind with their work, much of what the teacher is saying becomes incomprehensible to them—and they just stop listening. They thus become quite lost, settle down at the bottom of the class, where they are bored, or lost in fantasy, or frustrated and angry, according to their temperament. This, of course, is one of the evils of big classes. The teacher must address himself to the mass, and the "special cases" simply have to be neglected.

Where backwardness is due to defective intelligence of course no really curative method is possible, but it is possible to arrange

that the less intelligent are not taught at the same time and in the same way as the more intelligent, and that the two types are not brought into competition with one another. I believe that this problem is beginning to be tackled by most Education Authorities, by the use of "three stream" or other methods. Nevertheless, we do get at Barns a number of boys whose difficulties have been largely contributed to by this factor, and for them the only remedy is careful, painstaking and patient individual attention in which—and this is the vital point—their achievements are measured by comparison with their own previous standards, and not with the achievements of their more intelligent contemporaries. To say—or even to imply—"Johnny can multiply in £.s.d., but Tommy at the same age can't even do simple addition" is damning. But to say, "Well done, Tommy! Last year you could only add two lots of figures and now you can add six"—that is the way to encourage progress. That is Ben's way. To allow them to come into competition with brighter boys is to create a feeling of inferiority which may cause great unhappiness, emotional problems and an inhibition of effort. Only yesterday Bobby Dodd, our very successful Chairman, refused to take an attainments test. He is a boy with a fine personality, a born leader, and popular with everyone. But his I.Q. is not very high, and in spite of our efforts to avoid a competitive spirit, he was afraid that it might appear that he was not as "good" as some boys—though of course he did not give that as his reason.

Then there are the boys who have "got behind" by missing school. Sometimes this is unavoidable, as in the case of Sammy Johnson. But even so, the results in unhappiness and frustration leading to violent anti-social conduct outside school as well as in it may be serious.

Sammy arrived at Barns when he was not yet nine, and this is the first note we made about him :—

"Arrived a poor-looking, frail, downtrodden frightened thing, furtive and pathetic. But with, nevertheless, great capacity for mischief, 'devilment,' disobedience, mulishness, tantrums and every other kind of 'wickedness.' Language deplorable as to vocabulary, subject-matter and diction, which is very childish. Has a good working knowledge of the 'facts of life' and gives expression to very adult sexual fantasies. Always joins any truanting party. A knife-thrower. A biter and scratcher. Very responsive to affection." He had already been absent from school for half his school life as the result of accidents and illnesses. When he had been at Barns about three months he had another serious accident which resulted in

his being in hospital, off and on, for another year. When Ben took over the school Sammy was 11 years old and practically illiterate. He shewed a very strong sense of inferiority, bursting into fits of passionate anger and tears whenever the question of his reading came up. He loathed books, and for a long time either refused to have anything to do with reading, or at best approached it with a studied indifference. When asked to do a piece of work his immediate cry would be "I'm not going to do it. You won't get me to do it. Nothing will make me do it." This obstinate refusal to do work was of course a cloak—for the benefit of the other boys—of his inability to do it, or his fear that he might not be able to do it. Much better distinguish oneself by making a scene, than make oneself look silly by being unable to read a simple thing that the smallest boy can read! His fixed attitude to reading overflowed, unhappily not only to all English subjects, but to the rest of his school work. His attainments in arithmetic were nearly normal, but when faced with a new piece of work, even before attempting it, he would say, "I canna dae it; it's too hard!" This in a voice full of pent up emotion, fear, frustration, defeat. And then, unless one was prepared to devote the rest of the lesson to him, there were behaviour difficulties, inattention, fooling and bullying, ending in tears.

While Ben was making a frontal attack on this difficult position others of us were making an outflanking movement. We thought that if we could find some sphere of activity in which Sammy could distinguish himself, it might enhance his self-confidence, and make him less unwilling to admit deficiencies in another sphere. We therefore fostered his faint interest in woodwork until it became his principal occupation outside school hours, and one only had to mention woodwork to think of Sammy. He was now, I must say, very good at it; but he very soon thought he was, and we put him "in charge" of the woodwork ,ope. He was also at this time, "Minister of Routine," and the refrained, so far as possible, from criticism of the not very sfficient way he carried out his duties, because they gave him a good deal of compensation.

Ben, once he had got things sorted out, started a special class in the afternoons for boys needing therapeutic work in the schoolroom, hoping that all those who needed to come would do so voluntarily. In the main, they did; but not Sammy. He was encouraged, then persuaded, then urged, and perhaps in the end even nagged—for the problem was becoming urgent; Barns boys leave school at 14! But Sammy was not going to take the step of openly

admitting that he needed "extra school." One day, during a rather warm argument with Ben on this subject, he said "You canna make me go to extra school." This was a very broad hint, and Ben took it. It meant—undoubtedly—"I should like to enjoy the advantages of extra school, but cannot do so without losing face—to go voluntarily is to admit that I'm not as good as I might be at school-work. If, however, I were compelled to go, no such admission and, therefore, no such loss of face would be involved." "Oh, can't I?" said Ben. "Well—from now on you go to extra school, whether you like it or not." This was, strictly speaking, quite unconstitutional, and if Sammy had liked to challenge him at Committee there's no knowing what might have happened. The very fact that he did not charge Ben for wrongfully compelling him to go to extra school was a clear justification for Ben's action. Sammy made a show of protesting, sometimes had to be hunted up at extra school-time; sometimes even had to be carried struggling to school, but the struggles were not very thorough, being intended purely for the benefit of the onlookers. After a few days Ben abandoned the idea of having Sammy at ordinary extra school, and had him, instead, in his own room (and his own time!) but before six months had elapsed Sammy was asking to be allowed to go to ordinary extra school. His self-confidence was increased, he was calmer, had fewer "paddies," and gradually began to lose his interest in woodwork—he no longer needed it. Sammy is far from cured—but a very good start has been made.

Sammy, it is true, is an exceptional case in that the absences were involuntary. But it does show what can be the result of "getting behind" in school.

Many others have been absent voluntarily—the truants. Most Barns boys have truanted a good deal at one time or another; Harry Bryant, for example. He was nine when he came to us. He was of normal intelligence, but had put in only one third of the possible attendances during his first three years at school. His reading was equivalent to that of a boy of 6, his spelling to that of a boy of 5. His history is a picture of aggressiveness and destructiveness—"Will attack anyone and will return to the attack some time after being dragged away"—"Had a phase in which he was continually smashing things."—"Intense fantasy life—paints furiously and gets very excited over it." His home circumstances were such as I may not dwell on here; sufficient may be gathered from what I have to say in Chapter 13. A boy with this kind of background and temperament stays away from school because he

doesn't like it—the regimentation and the unimaginativeness of routine school-work in a class of 40 or so is just intolerable to such a person. Then, of course, he gets behind in his work, which causes exasperation in him as well as in the teacher—and so on.

Much could be written about the reasons for truanting, but they all come into three main categories—those arising in the school, those in the boy himself, and those arising in the home. Of course, I speak now, not of the occasional truanting such as we all enjoyed from time to time, but of persistent truanting over a long period of time. And of course all my three groups of causes inter-act upon one another. School seems an unpleasant place—so one stays away. That seems to me a very natural thing to do, and the reasons it may seem unpleasant I have already given. Or one might stay away because one doesn't get there in time. It would be silly to tell the teacher that, but it is what happens in many cases, of which Ginger Bright is only one. His father is said to have died when he was a baby, and his Grannie brought him up while his mother went to work. He developed what seemed to be an intense hatred of his mother, and indulged in extraordinary fantasies in which he stabbed her or drowned her, and did away with her in all manner of unpleasant ways. Sometimes these day-dreams would make him so unhappy that he would escape into an entirely different kind, in which he was an explorer, or was living the natural life of the birds and beasts of the woods. His fantasy-life was so absorbing that he would become quite lost to the world, and would "wake-up" in the middle of the morning to the fact that he was still on his way to school. It is easy to see how he would become "backward" and a school-hater. This was the boy, who, when his mother re-married and took him home said: "I'll go home, but I won't go to school; I'm coming back here to go to Benjie's school." And he did, too.

Then there is the group of reasons associated with the home—slovenliness, lack of order and method, lack of interest in the children—all of which militate against regular school attendance, besides creating emotional problems tending to inhibit interest in school-work, leading to backwardness, truanting, and so round the vicious circle. An extract from the social worker's notes on Walter Scott will illustrate what I mean. "... family consists of father, mother, Walter aged 10½, and other children aged seven, six, and two ... House consisting of two rooms, was in a dreadful condition of filth and untidiness ... Girl of seven was pale and wan, and obviously not in good health. Headmaster of School says the

family is very bad—no discipline—father was lazy. Had been told to take children to the clinic for scabies treatment, but had refused to do so. Girl of seven had suffered so much with scabies she hadn't been to school for six months . . . Attendance Officers were never out of the house . . . father had been fined ten shillings because of Walter's repeated absences, but it seemed to have no effect on him . . . " I quote this not as the worst example, but merely as the first that comes to mind, and it is fairly typical of this type of family. No-one cares two hoots whether you go to school, or what you do with your time. So why bother?

So backwardness may be caused by the nature of the school regime, by limited intelligence, by involuntary absences or by truanting. But there are other causes. You might be a fairly regular attender and still do badly if your emotional life is not happily adjusted ; but as I have already amply illustrated that sort of thing, I will say no more about it.

There remain the physical causes of backwardness. One immediately thinks of bad sight of course, with its obvious remedy of glasses. But mortality of glasses is so high among our boys that most of them are without more often than they are with them. I was thinking, however, rather of a more subtle kind of physical disability. In fact, I am not sure that it is physical. Perhaps we should do well to borrow that very useful phrase from McDougall's famous definition of an instinct, and call it psycho-physical, thus offending no-one. I refer to the phenomenon known as " Left Laterality." It means that the person concerned is left-handed or left-eyed or both. This may not seem a very dreadful thing, but it may seriously affect learning capacity because the left-lateral person has a tendency to move from right to left when you and I would move from left to right. Such a person very easily gets into difficulties with his reading and writing, and its repeatedly making apparently stupid mistakes such as spelling words backwards, or reading them as if they had been written backwards. And not only in English, for there are many mechanical processes in arithmetic in which one may become hopelessly muddled if one gets one's sense of direction mixed up. We were, therefore, not surprised to discover (more precisely, to have discovered for us*) that about two-thirds of the boys resident at Barns had one or more of the symptoms of this characteristic, and Ben had to set about finding the best way of coping with it, for it requires very special teaching methods.

* By Dr. M. MacMeeken, M.A., B.Ed., Ph.D., who has done a great deal of research in this field.

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These, then, were the boys with whom Ben had to deal. School-haters who had never had any interest in their school-work, had never had any sense of achievement, who had experienced in their school lives nothing but exasperation, frustration and defeat. And who were therefore, nearly all backward.

He first set himself the task of discovering the *degree* of each boy's backwardness, which he did by means of attainments tests.* These test a child's attainments in much the same way as the intelligence tests discover his capacity. As intelligence tests give a " Mental Age " so attainments tests give an " age " for reading, spelling, or whatever the subject might be for which the test was applied. If, for example, a boy of ten can read only as well as a boy of eight might be expected to read, we say his reading age is eight ; and just as we can get an " Intelligence Quotient " by the formula

$$\frac{\text{Mental Age}}{\text{Chronological Age}} \times 100,$$ so we can get a " Quotient " for each subject tested by the analogous formula

$$\frac{\text{Reading (or whatever it might be) Age}}{\text{Chronological Age}} \times 100.$$

The use of quotients is convenient because it removes the need to look up each boy's age every time one considers his attainments. The layman will probably think of them as percentages, and although this is heavily frowned on by the experts it does help the uninitiated to see what it is all about. The Attainment Quotient of a boy who is normal will be 100, if he is bright or dull it will be above or below 100 accordingly. Below, then, are the results of the Attainments Tests, which Ben applied in Reading, Spelling and Arithmetic, and I ask you not to follow my frequent practice of skipping the figures and going on with the text. Instead of giving names and ages I have given I.Q.'s, which enable you to see at a glance how retarded a boy is—one would expect his Attainments Quotient to be somewhere near his I.Q.

* The tests used were :—

For Reading—Burt's Re-arranged Word Reading Test, published by The Scottish Council for Research in Education.

For Spelling—Spelling Test, by the same Council.

For Arithmetic—Burt's Tests in the four fundamental operations.

These tests are useful, not only in assessing attainments, but also in discovering special weaknesses and individual difficulties. Especially useful in this connection, too, were Prof. Schonell's carefully graded tests in Arithmetic.

Intelligence Quotient	Attainment Quotient in Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
71	62	61	45
72	78	65	90
75	79	70	73
77	64	59	61
78	56	58	58
78	111	102	90
78	70	66	74
85	81	80	88
85	55	50	74
86	60	60	Infant level
88	105	97	76
89	90	77	61
89	82	71	73
89	78	71	58
93	94	78	61
95	93	90	?
96	64	56	67
96	104	91	76
97	92	80	63
97	67	62	60
97	124	102	77
98	98	89	72
100	68	62	63
100	118	117	65
104	97	92	79
105	109	76	84
106	120	100	67
111	112	84	70
148	138	138	132

That was what Ben found when he took over the school—or at least as soon after as he was able to apply the tests.

It will be seen that not a single boy was "up to standard" in all three subjects tested, and half of them were "below standard" in every subject—even when we compare their attainments not with their real age, but with their Mental Age! Eighteen of them were two or more years behind in one or more subjects, ten of them were three or more years behind, and of these there were some with as much as five years' retardation. One boy, for example, was eleven and a half years' old, had the *capacity* of a ten-years-old, and the *attainments* of a six-years-old.

I am not going to adduce any general argument from these particular few figures. But from all concerned with the treatment of difficult children I hear the same cry—"How *backward* they are in school!" Dr. Cyril Burt says "Of my delinquent cases, nine out of every ten fall below the middle line of average educational attainment; and three out of every five are so far below it as to be classifiable as technically 'backward' in school work," and adds in a footnote that backwardness among the whole school population of London may be taken at 10 per cent.*

* "The Young Delinquent" (1927), page 336. But it is interesting to note that Healy & Bronner found only 20 per cent. retarded. ("New Light on Delinquency," p. 61).

My experience at Barns has led me to wonder whether those of us who have concentrated on the emotional causes of delinquency have not perhaps under-rated the importance of this educational factor. It is true, of course, that in very many cases the educational retardation may be a symptom having its original cause in those same emotional upsets that are also the cause of the symptoms we call delinquency. But I think there is good reason to suppose that it may sometimes be of itself a cause of behaviour problems, and certainly it greatly aggravates the behaviour difficulties.

In any case, it is certainly a problem to be tackled, and it seems to me that in any institution dealing with difficult children there should be at least one person on the teaching staff who has special qualifications in educational therapy.

Returning, however, to Ben and his problem; it was obviously impossible, even approximately, to divide the school into classes according to age, and Ben did not attempt to do so. They were divided into two groups (as we had two teachers), the less advanced and the more advanced. Such is the heterodox nature of our school that the head teacher looks after the less advanced, for the obvious reason that the less advanced are the more difficult to teach. Even so, they are not two classes. There are about a dozen or more "classes," with only two teachers. In effect, every boy had to be treated as a separate problem though sometimes there were two or three boys who could be given the same work and could be expected to make about the same amount of progress. Ben and his colleague (Gordon T. Stubbs, Mus.Bac.) now knew, then, the degree of each boy's backwardness, and from our knowledge of their background, from our observation of them since they arrived at Barns, from diagnostic and other tests applied, they also knew pretty well the cause of the backwardness in each case. And with this knowledge, they started on their task of re-education—for that was what it amounted to in many cases.

This is not an educational treatise, and I am ignorant of the science of pedagogics. I cannot, therefore, pretend to deal with this aspect of the work in any detail—I can only give a general idea of what goes on. It was obvious above all that the first thing was to arouse and maintain each boy's interest, and this is especially so in reading and spelling. It usually happens that an older boy who cannot read has come to hate the idea of reading. One must stimulate his interest by using topics connected with his hobbies and special interests. (Richard Smith made sudden and rapid progress when he became a "Minister," and had to submit a weekly written

report to the General Meeting). Backwardness may often demand a fresh start from the beginning, but there could be no greater mistake than going back to infantile material. A start can be made by building up a vocabulary of words connected with, *e.g.*, the child's hobby. The words may be put in a book with, so far as possible, illustrations. Pictures and word matching exercises are helpful in securing the new knowledge. The child thus builds up his own reading book. He knows all the words in it and will take a pride and a pleasure in reading it. The possession of this new knowledge helps to establish confidence in himself—reading is not so far beyond his capacities after all. Another useful little dodge of Ben's (how far it is in general use I do not know) is that, in the "wee yins'" room, every single object has a large label tied on it bearing the name of the article, so that by degrees the name of the object becomes as familiar as the object itself. Many little dodges of this kind are used and they all have as their aim the stimulation of interest, and when that is aroused the individual difficulties that the tests have shewn, can be dealt with.

In all cases it is important that the child should play an active part in the process of learning, and he must be provided with materials that make this possible. Materials of this nature have been issued by educational publishers, but it is a good thing for a teacher to make his own materials to meet his own needs—or get the children to make them! There are masses of reading books for children at the infant level—but they are intended for infants, not boys of ten and eleven! And they all have the major drawback of being in print instead of cursive writing, which is apt to add to the confusion. It is found to be an enormous advantage not to teach reading letter by letter, but by whole words, each word being conceived as a unity in itself, and not a number of little bits. Cursive writing adds to this conception as script detracts from it. This method has the advantage of making use of kinesthetic memory—the child is able to remember not only what the word looks like when it is written, but what it *feels* like when you write it; the feeling then is about the whole word, and not about odd letters. This is of particular value in teaching left-lateral pupils (of whom we have so many) who may be able to write on to the end of the word when once they start it, provided they conceive it as one design. If, however, they think of it as several little designs in a row, they are very likely indeed to get the order confused. Most of the remedial exercises in reading and spelling have, therefore, been prepared by hand. Use has been made of graded word-and-picture-matching schemes, together with appropriate phonic lists, sentence building,

individual picture dictionaries, wall dictionaries, and so forth. Ben's inventiveness is as endless as his enthusiasm.

In arithmetic, too, it was found necessary to prepare pupil-teacher cards to meet individual needs. Professor Schonell's method of learning multiplication and division facts is used extensively.*

Throughout the whole field of remedial work it was found that the first element of success lay in the simple fact that the child's difficulties had been recognised; that they were a cause for sympathetic concern and not for blame; and that they were receiving individual attention. If the child receives sympathy and encouragement, and if there is regular progress and systematic revision, he soon begins to feel that he is getting somewhere, and will happily accept really hard work. Hence the cheers referred to in Chapter One, when "extra school" was announced.

I have often regretted, when I have been speaking or writing about our work, that there is no way of weighing or measuring the progress made by a boy in the overcoming of those difficulties for which he is referred to us. One can *see* changes, and often remarkable changes. One can see a sullen, furtive, frightened child develop into a bright, open, happy person. But what a help it would be in our publicity if we could express that progress in figures! We have to manage as well as we can without, but in this particular aspect of our work we *can* give figures, and I beg leave to remind the reader that the methods that have produced these figures are the same methods, in principle, as those which produce, the other, imponderable results. But as they have been applied to the other, outside-school, part of the work longer than they have been applied in the school, the presumption is that the results in that field are even more gratifying.

All that as a prologue to the statistics given below. When Ben had been at work a year, he applied the attainments tests again to see whether progress was being made. I give below the figures which were produced for the 20 boys who took both lots of tests.

There are nine boys fewer here than on the list shewn on page 115; this is merely because nine boys left during the year in question. The last boy on the list with his I.Q. of 148, is quite obviously out of his element in our school, and as soon as his behaviour difficulties shewed signs of clearing up he was sent to the High School.

These figures, if you will be good enough to give them the attention

* F. J. Schonell—"Backwardness in the Basic Subjects."

Attainments Quotients in :—

Intelligence Quotients	READING			SPELLING			ARITHMETIC*		
	First Test	Second Test	Progress in months	First Test	Second Test	Progress in months	First Test	Second Test	Progress in months
72	78	77	7	65	66	8	90	88	4
75	79	86	19	70	72	12	73	87	28
77	64	73	24	59	55	3	61	63	8
78	56	67	20	58	63	12	58	70	19
78	111	113	16	102	100	10	90	92	7
78	70	?	?	66	66	8	74	81	16
85	81	86	16	80	75	5	88	103	24
85	55	61	17	50	58	18	74	86	24
86	60	76	29	60	71	22	Infant level		
88	105	103	8	97	95	9	76	78	8
89	90	93	20	77	73	7	49	64	9
89	78	87	22	71	75	12	58	60	9
97	92	102	22	80	72	6	63	68	9
97	124	127	17	102	104	15	77	79	7
100	68	81	23	62	63	12	63	73	17
100	118	116	12	117	100	6	65	70	15
104	97	114	32	92	94	15	79	96	19
105	109	116	21	76	89	26	84	80	3
111	112	110	8	84	92	19	70	71	6
148	138	127	?	138	106	?	132	130	?

* The Arithmetic results are after a *six* and not a twelve month interval.

they deserve, speak for themselves, and should be enough to silence any doubter. Not every boy made astonishing progress during the year, there are still some whose difficulties are not properly understood; especially in spelling, but they will be dealt with in time. One of the objects of the test was to find out how many of the boys were being successfully dealt with, and further investigations will now be needed in the case of those who have not made satisfactory progress. But in the main, the picture is one of most extraordinary progress, and one such as any teacher might be very proud of. It must be borne in mind, too, that there has been no cramming or anything like it. Barns boys go to school for an hour a day less than most State schoolboys, and this progress is all the result of happy, purposeful work, which has given pleasure to the boys in the same degree as their results have given satisfaction to the teachers.

I end this chapter with a few lines from Ben's report to the Committee when these results of his first year's work were known :—

"There have been occasions when I have felt that we stressed freedom and self-discipline to the detriment of quietness and dignity, and in using individual self-activity methods, we ran the risk of losing the steady progress which more formal teaching was designed to secure. It is very gratifying to discover that the way we have always felt to be right has now been proved to be so."

CHAPTER TWELVE

PRUDES AND BESOMS*

"Who said, 'Ay, mum's the word'?"
WALTER DE LA MARE—"The Song of the Mad Prince."

I COMPLAINED in Chapter Two about a certain lack of moral sense among Barns boys. That was true, so far as it went. Particularly in relation to questions of *meum* and *tuum* and similar aspects of social life does their behaviour seem to be based more on fear of consequences than upon any opinion as to the rightness or wrongness of a particular piece of behaviour. But in the sphere of the emotions—on questions of their feelings about people—they are apt to acquire enormous and overburdening feelings of guilt, to which I have referred elsewhere. These guilt feelings are not necessarily conscious—rather the contrary—though in a young child they are not buried so deep in the unconscious as they are likely to be in the case of an adult. But there is one type of behaviour which is almost invariably felt to be wicked beyond measure—though not necessarily therefore to be avoided! I refer to the type of behaviour which they describe as "dirty."

I suspect that this conscious feeling of guilt about "dirty" things is even more pronounced among Scottish children than among their English equivalents. My friend Reginald Reynolds, in his admirable book "Cleanliness and Godliness," complains about the debasement of the English language so that it is no longer polite to refer to a water closet, which has therefore, come to be known as a place for washing oneself. But the word lavatory itself is now hardly decent, and he wonders how long it will be before the word bathroom brings a blush to the cheek of the modest. In some parts of Scotland at least, that day is very near. Among the boys who come to Barns, "bathroom" does not in the least, mean what it means to you and me. It is associated in their minds purely and simply (if such an association can be either pure or simple) with its secondary function, and they are genuinely surprised when you explain to them what its primary function is. They think you are trying to be funny and in some vague way, dirty—just as a cockney

* "Bisms!" Barns boys pronounce it, and they mean something of a minx and something of a trollope.

child might if you were to tell him that a lavatory is a place for washing. Not only is a privy which contains nothing but a close-stool, invariably known as a bathroom, the acts of micturition and defæcation are called " doing a bathroom."

This excessive delicacy is not confined to matters of bodily evacuation. It applies to the whole body, and it applies beyond everything else to matters of sex.

Nor is it the child of ignorance. There are very few boys who come to Barns—at however early an age—without some kind of working knowledge of the "facts of life." I well remember one day during our first winter, walking along the drive with Sammy Johnson. He was chatting away as we walked, and I have to confess that I was taking very little notice of what he was saying. Sammy was very backward (he was not yet nine), his speech was babyish and his diction was very bad, so listening was rather a strain when one considers that there was also the Edinburgh accent (with which I was not as yet very familiar) to cope with. Presently however, hearing Jean's name mentioned several times, I pricked up my ears and began to pay attention. He was not really talking to me. He was " fantasying " aloud, and his fantasy was, if you please, an elaborate fantasy of sexual intercourse!

Copulation is, to many of our boys, a commonplace idea before they come to us, but the odd thing is that it is none the less regarded as a disgustingly dirty practice! This attitude they must have acquired either from their parents or from other boys in their environment who had got it from *their* parents.

Among what are sometimes known as " the lower orders " sexual intercourse begins too often in a furtive, sniggering, groping manipulation of each other's genitalia in dark doorways, in " the pictures," or on a park bench, until marriage provides them with a bed, a licence for further intimacy (if indeed the marriage is not the result of further intimacy) and public approval of the inevitable result. There is no doubt that this nasty, furtive, sniggering attitude is carried over into the intercourse of ordinary married life. In far too many cases, in poor and overcrowded districts, children sleep in the same room as their parents until a late age. They have listened at night to sniggerings and furtive mutterings coming from the other bed, carried out in the particular tone of voice which is associated with " dirty " things. They have heard all these things and, very naturally, they have investigated. When their investigations take the form of direct questions they are often told, either sniggeringly or indignantly, not to be " dirty ", and it is made quite clear that the whole thing is something the adults are ashamed of. It soon becomes

obvious to the child that something "dirty" is going on, and it is not very long before he finds out what that "dirty" thing is.

Miss Melanie Klein, the eminent psychoanalyst of children, appears to trace a large number of child-neuroses with which she dealt, to the fact of the child having witnessed what she calls "the primal scene."* Not for one moment would I like to be thought that I dispute her findings—even if I were qualified to do so. But most of the children she treated seem to have been middle-class children, brought up to "middle-class morality," to whom witnessing the primal scene would be most unusual and exceptional, and hence tend to be traumatic. Some of our children have been more frequent witnesses of the primal scene, and while I do not deny that it may in some cases lead to neurosis, and while it may be an important cause of their difficulties, what it does undoubtedly lead to is a sordid and nasty conception of the relation of the sexes, and a state of unhappy and complete bewilderment that their own parents should be habitually "dirty," and above all, that life itself is the result of behaviour they are brought up to regard as "dirty." What a puzzling and difficult world! After all, if my parents are dirty, why shouldn't I be dirty? For they are not told that these things, like smoking and drinking and staying up late, are the preserve of adulthood, but merely that they are dirty.†

We have to try at Barns to cope with this situation. We cannot do it as well as I should like, and I have come at length to the conclusion that we cannot hope to do it unless we have girls as well as boys in the hostel. The superficial "progressive" may think that this should have been obvious all along, and that we should have been co-educational from the start. It is not as simple as all that. In the first place, co-education must not be confused with co-re-education, if I may make that ugly word even uglier—and our work is both. To take children of both sexes from respectable homes at an early age and educate them together is one thing, and perhaps a good thing. But the re-education together of boys and girls with this unhealthy attitude to and precocious knowledge of sexual matters, is something that needs to be thought over at least twice before it is plunged into. Then it appears that there are far more "difficult" boys than girls and we should probably have had great difficulty in keeping something like an even balance of the sexes. There was the fact, too, in our case that the house available

* The Psychoanalysis of Children.

† I should not like it to be thought that I believe this nasty, sniggering attitude to sex to be confined to the "lower orders." I know, alas, that it is not. But among them it is more easily and more early transmitted to the children than among "respectable" families.

to us was not well suited to the accommodation of both sexes. Further, while our work is experimental, it would have been unwise to experiment in too many fields at once. Finally, I myself, have had very little experience with girls, and none with difficult girls. So, taking all these factors into consideration it was decided—and I think in all the circumstances, rightly decided—to take only boys. I think, though, that if there is a next time for me, I shall be, on the whole, against segregation, in spite of my own inexperience.

Before I came to Scotland I was for a short time in charge of a hostel for somewhat similar children in the South. We found there that some of the boys were friendly with some girls in the village. They seemed to regard this as something they must be surreptitious about, so we tried to bring it into the open. We had a birthday party and invited all the girls. As the evening wore on we noticed that the girls seemed to need to "leave the room" a very large number of times, and presently we discovered that every time they went in to a W.C. they took a boy in with them. These girls really were "dirty" and I, who have perhaps seen more than the average of what sentimental writers call "the sordid side of life," was shocked at what I discovered about their conversation and conduct. Eventually (though not until my wife had tried running a club for them) we had to exclude them from the hostel. I am not among those who are horrified at the idea of children inspecting and experimenting with one another. But I confess that I am horrified by the idea of a boy's only contact with girls being of a kind which he considers dirty. For there is such a thing as dirt in sex, even if, like beauty, it is in the eye of the beholder.

We had a similar experience at Barns. Some of the older boys became "pally" with some girls from the town. I did not imagine that we should have a second time, the experience we had suffered before. But we did. Once again I encouraged them to come up to the Hostel, and once again they were unusually unpleasant little creatures whose aim in making the acquaintance of the boys was solely to display themselves and swop dirty stories. If those girls had been resident at Barns it would not have mattered. There would then have been ample opportunity for every kind of healthy relationship with the boys, in addition to the sexual investigatory relationship, which we should soon have been able to put on a healthy basis. But since it seemed that their only contact was to be a sniggering one, I discouraged it.

This was the beginning of what later blossomed into my weekly "hygiene" class. I am not a teacher, but I have usually helped

out with the teaching in a minor way. At this time I used to have a group of the older boys in my sitting-room for poetry. The boys happened to be mostly the ones who had been entangled with the nasty little girls, so I thought I would try to explain my attitude. We, therefore, scrapped poetry for a few weeks in favour of sex talks. First we had a few talks on the machinery of reproduction, to make sure they had the facts right. I was able to tell them very little they didn't know, except a few technical terms which they then bandied about with great pride. A few were glad to have their minds set at rest about the naturalness and innocence of morning erections which they had just begun to experience, and there were gaps here and there which I was able to fill in. But by and large, they were pretty well informed. Indeed, in the four years we have been here, I only recall one case of gross anatomical misinformation, and that appears to have been somewhat obsessional in nature.

I then tried to explain how it was that while sex is not itself " dirty," it could be made so by people having a nasty attitude to it. It is a difficult idea to put across to boys of 11, 12 and 13, and how much success I had I do not know. But I think something reached them.

A little while after this Ben asked me to take a weekly " Hygiene " Class, which I have been doing ever since. This " Hygiene " is a mixture of Anatomy, Biology, Physiology and Sexology, and it goes down very well. I am an authority on none of these subjects, and my method is the time-honoured one of keeping one jump ahead of the class. It includes such things as, on the one hand, the structure of the body, and on the other the reason for keeping the nose clean; how the muscles work (and I find I am not the only one who doesn't understand this) and why bowels must be opened regularly; what happens to your food when you've swallowed it, and where babies come from. Everything that can have anything to do with the body is dragged in (so far as I can find out anything about it !) and things hitherto regarded as " dirty " are put (I hope !) in their proper place. For, however much faulty information I may impart on subjects which, I am astonished to find, are still little understood by the experts, I believe we really are getting sex out of the realm of dirt and sniggering and furtiveness.

The house is on the banks of the Tweed, so there is a great deal of bathing, which is all (so far as the boys are concerned) done in the innocent nude, and it has come to be accepted as a perfectly natural thing. So much so, that when we went to camp they all jumped into the farmer's duck-pond in the same natural way, and were indignantly chased out by the farmer as a set of " dirty little

rascals." I had carefully brought along some bathing slips (improvised) against this contingency, but they just couldn't be bothered with them, and the voluntary helper who was supervising the bathing was not experienced enough in the ways of the world to guess what a Border farmer's attitude to nudity was likely to be! Very often, when signs of puberty begin to show themselves a boy is reluctant to go in if the womenfolk are about, but I see nothing unhealthy in a certain measure of modesty in the adolescent.

For the rest, sex re-education takes place all day and every day. By maintaining a healthy attitude ourselves, and by encouraging them to talk openly and naturally of things they had hitherto considered dirty, we hope that we are gradually fostering a healthy attitude in the boys. But although it may be healthier when they leave than when they come, we can do little about helping them to get along easily and naturally with girls, until we have some girls living in the family.

It will be noticed that I have said nothing about masturbation. If this is a problem at Barns, I am blind to it. It is true that in the early days, before our efforts at sex-education had got under way, one or two of the older boys, I heard, were worried about masturbation—but not, I believe, seriously. It must be remembered that boys of the Barns type have not been subjected to "middle-class morality," and therefore, do not seem to have been told any of the perfectly ridiculous and dreadful things that are often told to boys a little higher up in the social scale about bodily decay and mental derangement following this common practice. These boys of whom I spoke were just a little worried because, as what they had been doing was connected with parts of their anatomy they considered dirty, then their behaviour was dirty and they were a little worried about it. I tried, with how much success I do not know, to set their minds at rest. But among the boys who have been growing up at Barns since then, there is in the main, an attitude to sex sufficiently healthy to prevent masturbation becoming the problem it is with some boys. The principal damage done by masturbation is caused by undue worrying about it. The fact of worrying about it keeps it constantly in the mind, giving it a somewhat obsessive quality, thus increasing its frequency, hence greater worry—and so on. This is a thing about which it is very easy to be misunderstood, and I should not like it to be thought that my attitude is merely one of "Oh, masturbation, that's nothing—don't worry about *that*." It is an undesirable practice, however common it may be, but its evils have been in the past grossly exaggerated, and it seems to me that it is better to treat it as an undesirable, but not

a frightfully sinful or harmful practice, which one should try to overcome, like nail-biting and similar practices. And I do think that it is perhaps better for a boy to worry too little about it than to worry too much. However that may be, sex among Barns boys—at least when they have been with us a year or two—is not something to worry about, so masturbation is not a problem among them.

I know that to the psychoanalyst the latency period (during which most of our boys come to us) is a period of intense conflict about masturbation. But it is an unconscious conflict. I know too, that the psychoanalyst would say that during the latency period two things are essential if the boy is to develop normally. He must be sure of the love and approval of his " objects " (usually the parents or parent substitutes) and he must be given a sense of achievement. Perhaps it is because at Barns we concentrate on these two things that the boys seem to emerge from latency into adolescence with no serious masturbation problem.

Chapter Thirteen

THE SONS OF THE FATHERS

" . . . in like way is all hidden when we would backward see from what regi of remoteness the whatness of our whoness hath fetched his whenceness "

James Joyce—" Ulysses."

I said I should probably refer again to the story of Stephen Baillie. I cannot give as many details of the family as I should like, as obviously, I cannot run the risk of its being recognised. Baillie senior was, according to several social work agencies which had dealings with the family, a difficult, aggressive, self-opinionated man, completely dominating his wife, who seemed an inoffensive little woman, perhaps indulgent to her children, and very easily swayed by them or by him. They had a medium-sized family, one member of which was in an Approved School. They disclaimed strongly that they had any difficulty with Stevie, but the mother gladly accepted the suggestion that he should be evacuated to Barns. He had been truanting, staying out late and going with a rough gang of boys, although he was only nine, and there seems also to have been a certain amount of pilfering. He had been evacuated once before, but returned as incorrigible. The father was not so keen on the idea of Stevie's evacuation, but gave in to Stevie's pleading, which was the more urgent because his mother had assured him that among the attractions of Barns was the fact that there was " nae schule." She afterwards admitted the lie quite unashamedly, saying she thought it would encourage him to go to Barns.

Stevie arrived then in July, 1940. He came with another little boy of about the same age whom he promptly claimed (though without the slightest foundation) as a cousin, and over whom he early established an ascendancy which seems to have been modelled on his father's relation to his mother. Wee Sandy Sporran and he were almost inseparable for some weeks, though always " charging " one another. It soon began to be apparent that Stevie was using Sandy to do his dirty work for him—Sandy did the pilfering and Stevie took the profits. However, there was no occasion for us to take any action about that because as soon as Sandy began to find his way around he started charging Stevie for his various assaults upon his integrity, and after a while the partnership was broken.

But his capacity to dominate other boys remained a characteristic of Stevie all the time he was with us. It was not done by bullying or any kind of terrorisation—he had not the physique for that. It was done by charm of manner, persuasiveness and a glib tongue. Though a noisy, strident, mischievous little boy (he once laid a trail of tin-tacks on the stairs down which the boys go, barefoot, to their bath) he could, if he wanted to ingratiate himself, switch on a most soulful expression in his beautiful big eyes with their long lashes. He seemed to find it more easy to lie than not. When asked a question a lie sprang to his lips (it seemed) as spontaneously as the truth to anyone else's, and if he paused before replying it was probably because he was going to speak the truth. He always had a reply ready, and was strong in defence of his rights—one who could develop into an excellent example of what is known as a "lag's lawyer."

We described him during his first few weeks as "An incorrigible thief and liar . . . Loves screaming, and will make himself so difficult at bedtime that he sometimes has to be forcibly undressed, during which time he screams continuously." (This note makes me smile. The idea of Jean, who was in charge of him at that time, "forcibly" undressing anyone is a little quaint. But I suppose that would be what she called it.) ". . . Spits in people's faces . . . language to Jean deplorable . . . very high-spirited . . . in some ways the most spirited boy here . . ." By December—a mere five months later—we were able to note, "A happy purposeful child now, presenting no serious problem but gains need to be consolidated." The reason we noted that gains needed to be consolidated was that, although lying and stealing and screaming and spitting were gone, he still displayed a much milder symptom of insecurity—he was never happy unless he had a "keeper." That is to say, he was continually committing offences not serious in themselves, but which might involve us in trouble with our neighbours—trespassing in game woods, and that sort of thing. The reply of the Committee to such offences is usually a restriction of freedom as a preventive measure. At first the restriction is a mild one, but if that does not answer the restriction becomes more and more severe until at last the boy concerned may be handed over to the care of a "keeper," with whom he has to stay at all times, and who is responsible for keeping him out of mischief. This sounds like a very severe sentence but actually it is rarely anything of the sort. Very often the offender will contrive to be given as keeper, someone whom he likes and the two become real companions so that the conditions of their partnership are irksome to neither. It will readily be seen that this is admirable "medicine"

for a boy who is beginning to feel less insecure but has not quite found his feet yet, and Stevie for some months absolutely insisted on having a keeper. Whenever the keeper was "taken off," he soon saw to it that one was "put on" again. Stevie then was going steadily forward. But three months later—in March, 1941—we find this note:—"Very serious lapse since last note. Fractious, stealing, tremendous amount of hoarding, which seems chief pre-occupation, especially of stolen goods. Seems to have stolen £1 from D.W., 10/- from G.T. (two visitors), 2/- from office in copper and several other sums, besides cutlery, etc.—all for hoarding" in various "hidey-holes" about the place. (It will be recalled that some of the more serious thefts had not been committed by Stevie at all—he had merely directed suspicion to himself; but this had not become clear at the time the note was made (*see page* 19). "Now having weekly talks with Wills, from which it appears that father recently died—apparently about time of relapse. But stories of father's death vary, and it may be pure fantasy. Wills to have enquiries made." Well—we had enquiries made. Stevie said his information had come from his mother, so our enquiries began with her. She was very vague about it all, but "didn't think" she had told Stevie his father was dead. She said her husband was away on Government work, but admitted that she had not heard from him for some months and that he was not supporting her. "From information received," however (to use that very useful police formula) it soon became clear to us that Baillie had deserted, and when there was no further doubt about this I sought an interview with Stephen. I told him his father was not dead. To my suggestion that he already knew this, his reply was indeterminate. Then I told him quite bluntly that, in fact, his father had deserted. His reaction astonished me and confirmed my impression that he had known all along. Without pausing for thought or for question or for further elucidation, he burst forth into a torrent of the most foul, obscene and offensive vituperative against his father (with a few by-blows at me). That finished me with Stevie. He had thought a good deal of his father, and I, as father surrogate, had enjoyed the advantage of that. Refusing to believe ill of him, he had "killed him"—or he had "killed" him for refusing to live up to the standard Stevie had set for him; or of course—which is more likely—he killed him for an illogical amalgam of both these reasons. Now I had insisted on bringing him to life again, and had substituted for the dead hero, a living rogue. Very good; I was still father surrogate, and there were no more weekly talks with me.

But from that moment we began to see an improvement in

Stevie again. He did not change overnight, but having accepted the facts, he began to adjust himself to them. He began, slowly, to be less interested in hoarding (and stealing things to hoard), there was less talk about hidey-holes, less lying and—most interesting of all, he restored his father to us. He had given various staff members at various times, accounts of his father's demise. Now to each of them he gave, at odd times, equally imaginary accounts of his father's present activities, differing in many particulars, but all agreeing in the one particular that his pursuits were now mundane and not celestial. I see, on looking back at the notes we made about that time, that we attempted what I described as a "tentative interpretation." "Mother told him father had deserted," though perhaps not in so many words. He therefore "killed" father in fantasy and thus (*a*) wants to bury him to get him out of his mind (hiding and hoarding); (*b*) wants to be punished for his crime ("naughty" behaviour, directing suspicion to himself, etc.) and (*c*) feels insecure owing to loss of father and wants to hedge himself about with lies, etc. (a form of hiding and protection). Doubtless, too, the knowledge of various articles hidden in places known only to him would tend to make him feel less insecure. Whether this makes sense or not Stevie slowly got better and better as we did our best to provide him with security on a deeper level than lies and hidey-holes, so that by the following spring, he had marched steadily forward to the state he had been in before his relapse. An interesting contributory factor in his recovery, as well as a measure of its progress, was an ingenious idea of Jean's. She gave him a "bank" containing several coins. This he treasured very highly, going to bed every night with it under his pillow for some weeks. When he began to feel a littler happier he manœuvred the coins out of the box and spent them, but still kept the box religiously under his pillow like a talisman. After a few more weeks, however, even that became unnecessary, and Stevie was his own man again. Ben told us that in school, during the "relapsed" period, Steven had been most reluctant to do any new work, but as he began to mend he was "now more ready to tackle new things and works away steadily (January, 1942)." By the summer of 1942 we had ceased to worry about Master Baillie, and were merely watching, with some satisfaction if not even complacency, the slow consolidation of gains made. Alas, there was little time for consolidation. In July his mother took him away. I did my best to prevent her, but it seemed that her husband was back again and had decided to have Stevie home. His conscience was at work, I imagine. Poor Stevie thought he was going home for a holiday, and was annoyed when, on reaching

home, he found he was expected to stay. He soon began badgering his parents to allow him to come back to Barns, but it was not until he had been home seven months that he was successful. He returned to Barns in February, 1943, his mother having given a solemn undertaking that there was to be no more snatching away.

He was not the same as the Stevie that left. There was a hard look in his eye (for of course he was " back " again in more senses than one), was more calculating in his lies, and more difficult to detect. Instead of stealing fairly light-heartedly, he planned ahead, invariably implicating someone else, and generally seeing to it that they got the blame. We saw that we had to start all over again, and that it was likely to be as difficult a job as ever.

As soon as he arrived, he wanted to go home again. We are always reluctant to take back boys who have been left some time, because while in the drab surroundings of their homes they form a highly idealised picture of Barns in their minds, and the reality is apt to be a disappointment. We made an exception in Stevie's case because—well, because he was Stevie I suppose! Well, we got over that stile, and it was not many days before he had stopped talking about going home again. But beyond that, progress was very, very slow, and when he had been back three months I upset everything. I shouted at him. In all conscience I had cause enough, though I will not weary you with that, and few people would have contented themselves with merely shouting. But it was a mistake. He told his father. He did not improve on the occasion, as boys often do when they are feeling disgruntled, by saying I had beaten him or thrown him about. He told his father simply that I had shouted at him, and that was enough—his father came for him. In reply to my reasonings, my implorings, my begging and praying, my coaxing and wheedling, Mr. Baillie favoured me with a short lecture on the proper way to deal with sensitive children who should, I was told, never be shouted at— having five minutes earlier told me that Stevie would be well chastised if he tried his monkey tricks at home! I reminded him of the definite undertaking Mrs. Baillie had given me that Stevie was to stay here this time. He simply laughed at that. And finally, when I saw that it really was quite impossible to keep Stevie (for it would be useless to have him back again, supposing his parents were willing after a few more months), feeling that I was entitled to some little recompense, I gave myself the supreme pleasure of telling Baillie Senior what I thought about him, in simple but not, I fear, in dignified English. You may think that such a course would do no one any good. It did me a great deal of good, and I fear that the unsuspecting

Mr. Baillie got a good deal of what I had often longed to say to many parents.

This long story is not strictly a true one. It is merely founded on fact, and I have altered it in several material particulars so that none may say " That is I " or " that is he." But I have altered it in no way that affects the validity of the moral I wish to draw. That moral is, simply, that people like my " Baillies " are not fit to have the custody of children, and should have their children taken from them. As the law stands to-day, that cannot be done, or it cannot be done without a great deal of difficulty. The law does, of course, allow of the removal of children from the custody of their parents. Broadly speaking, it may be done if the children are being grossly neglected or cruelly ill-treated physically or if they are being subjected to immoral influences. Unfortunately, immoral in this context always seems to refer to sexual immorality such as living in a brothel or being the subjects of incest. If I were to go to court and say " Tom Jones is being subjected to immoral influence. Both his parents are liars," I'm afraid it is very unlikely that any serious action would be taken.

It is true also that a child who has committed a crime may be removed from his parents' control by committal to a " fit person " who is to all intents and purposes *in loco parentis*. But the trouble with this is that the child must commit an offence before it happens, and in any case it is not used (in my opinion) half often enough, owing to the sentimental prejudice that exists against taking children from their homes. I have nothing against the home as an institution. I merely claim that many boys of the kind I am concerned with haven't got a home in any real sense, and in acting in the way I suggest you are not depriving him of a home, you are giving him one—often for the first time in his life. " A bad home," say the ignorant sentimentalists " is better than none." I do not know exactly what they mean by a bad home, but I am certain that a good foster-home, second best though it be, is immeasurably better than the sort of place so many boys of the Barns type are brought up in.

Stevie Baillie is a good example of the sort of thing I mean, but please do not for one moment imagine that—among Barns boys and their kind—he is by any means an isolated case. " Is your mother," I said hesitatingly, to Cecil Bryant, " always strictly truthful ? " " I dinny ken," he said, " I think she is when she's talking to other grown-ups ; but she isna wi' us." That was a large part of the trouble with Cecil and his brother, Harry. His mother 'phoned one day from a call-box—would we send the boys home for a short holiday next morning ? As it was in the school holidays we complied

without question. When they got home there was no mother there —she had disappeared and no-one knew where she was, so they were packed off to Barns by Grannie. A few weeks later she was promising to come and see them "next visiting Sunday," but nothing ever came of it. Then they were to go home for a holiday at Christmas. "I'll come and fetch you next Wednesday," said the letter, but there was no sign of mother on Wednesday. "Coming for you Saturday," said the wire, but no sign of mother on Saturday. Then there was silence until the middle of the term, when a letter came—for me this time—saying she was coming for the boys "on Sunday" and giving various reasons why I should let them home during mid-term, for a whole fortnight. The letter came on Saturday, so that was no time to reply. She followed it the same afternoon. If I had tried to insist that the boys were not to go home in mid-term we might have lost them altogether, so I let them go. They were away three weeks, and returned without overcoats or ration books, but with—in the case of Cecil anyway—a very nasty temper. Like so many mothers, she tried to atone for months of neglect by a few weeks of over-indulgence. They went to the pictures every day for three weeks, and when the time came for them to return to Barns they were told "I'll be having you home for good in the summer."

Before this Cecil had been making great strides, in spite of the many unkept promises. Stealing had completely stopped, tantrums were rare, he was making a real contribution to the general well-being and was working hard for his "qualifying exam." He was eager and purposeful, and we were proud of him. After his three weeks at home he just flopped. No stealing, it is true, but foul temper, listlessness, carelessness and no interest in anything. Why? Partly because mother said he was "going home for good" before long, which itself would be unsettling enough, but partly also, and this is a large part, because *he didn't know whether to believe her or not.* You who have been brought up in respectable and well-conducted homes where the only lie that is known is the social taradiddle, imagine what it must be like to have a mother whom you know to be a liar, and whose word you can never trust. How can such a child feel stable and secure? Is there any reason under the sun why a woman like this, simply because of the biological accident of being their physical mother, should be allowed and, indeed encouraged, to play fast and loose with the lives of human beings?

Then there was Mrs. Goff. Dan Goff came to us because he was a persistent truant, a shocking liar, and quite beyond his parents' control. His father was a deserter in the military as well as in the matrimonial sense. Mrs. Goff used to send letters to Daniel in which

she discussed the sexual aberrations of her husband and her friends with the utmost candour—Daniel then being 10 years old. When I discovered that I took to censoring Dan's incoming mail, much to the annoyance of the mother. Then father, having been recovered by the military and having consequently served a spell in gaol, thought he might as well return also to matrimony, took control of the family and ordered Daniel's return home. Before Dan had been home three months he appeared in the Court on his mother's prosecution, as being "beyond parents' control." The charge was dropped on it being agreed that Daniel should return to Barns. What they had been doing to him I do not know, but he was so terrified as he got near to Barns that I did not re-introduce him to his friends at first, but put him straight to bed in the sick-room so that he could find his feet gradually. From the sick-room, before he had so much as seen another boy, he wrote to his mother saying how he was being bullied by the other boys here. At least he wrote a letter. Before it was time to post it he was feeling a little better, so it didn't go. That by the way. From that moment until the present time, 18 months later, the mother has not sent him a single letter that has not been concerned with some plan to get Daniel back home again, by subterfuge or downright deceit. On one occasion she begged him home "for one day" for his sister's birthday. I could not resist this, because Daniel was so keen on it. He had had a letter once before (which somehow evaded my censorship) in which his mother had told him to "come home for good," sending him the fare, but he had decided—*of* his own free will—that he was better off at Barns. Another time when his mother wanted him home for a holiday he had cheerfully agreed with me that once he got home he would probably stay there, so he'd better not go. So I felt that there was a good chance of his being able to resist his mother's blandishments, though that in itself would not have been sufficient reason for my agreeing to his going home if there had not been the additional reason that Daniel had made some very nice toys for his sister at woodwork, and it seemed a pity not to let him have the pleasure of giving them to her. So he went—for one day. He came back, seven weeks later, after much pressure from me, from Hilda Ludlam (our social worker) and from the School Attendance Officer. I afterwards learned that he had been working on a milk round all this time—during school hours, too. In a way I was glad of this, because it enabled me, the last time Mrs. Goff tried to get Daniel away, to threaten her with prosecution, which at any rate has silenced her for a few weeks. Relations between Mrs. Goff and us are, therefore, rather

bad, but the extraordinary thing is that from the very moment Daniel came here—quite voluntarily, and at his parents' request —she has insisted on treating us as enemies of her and of her boy. Hilda Ludlam has never had from her anything but abuse, and I—though I have never seen her—am never referred to but with oaths and obscenity.

In what sense is it right to leave any child in such hands?

Not, let me hasten to add, that it is always the mother that is to blame. Mrs. Johnson is pretty harmless, though weak and vacillating. Her husband is a little, drunken, violent tough. By some amazing Mendelian freak they have bred a son who is gentle, intelligent and sensitive. Not, as I almost wrote, acutely sensitive, but very surprisingly so, compared with his father. To Mr. Johnson, Paul is just "no bloody good." He has always been treated with the utmost contempt by his father and it is not surprising that this boy, who really has excellent qualities, should have an intense sense of inferiority. We have worked hard to eradicate it, and not entirely without success. But he cannot face the prospect of going to live with strangers, so when he is 14 he will go home. I tremble to think of the result. What an astonishing law it is that compels this lamb to lie down with that lion—to be accurate, which prevents us from removing this lamb from that lion's den. For there is nothing in law that we can do—at least until Paul commits a crime, and then he will probably be put on probation as a first offender, and kept at home to suffer the increased opprobrium of his father.

In considering what I should write in this chapter I compiled a list of examples I could quote. I have by no means exhausted them —indeed they could in themselves fill a book. There must be thousands of such homes. What can be done about them? Manifestly, society cannot employ an army of Paul Prys to ferret their way into all the homes in the United Kingdom to see whether parents are fit to have the custody of their children. But when the facts are discovered—as they often are—by Probation Officers, Social Workers and others, then the law should provide a remedy.

I imagine that hostels of the Barns type have come to stay. There are only two that I know of in Scotland, but I gather that there are many in England, though the powers that be do not seem anxious that they should know much about each other. They are —for the most part—at present part of the Evacuation Scheme and, of course, if they are to continue after the war some different kind of legislative provision will have to be made for them. I hope I am not too sanguine in assuming that that will be done. When it *is* done, I hope and pray there will be some means by which

Wardens or Headmasters or whatever they may be called, may be given a status—where the facts warrant it—*in loco parentis* in the legal sense, not only during the period of the child's residence in the hostel, but for some years afterwards.

In one case and one case only (and that because Peebles has an unusually enlightened Sheriff substitute) I have had a Barns boy committed to me as a "fit person" until he is 18. There is not the slightest doubt that it is this fact and, so far as I can see, only this fact, that has prevented his entering a career of crime. He is now 16 (and of course no longer resident at Barns) and although he has given us some anxious moments, all seems set fair now.

I am convinced that in a large number of cases the cure for juvenile crime is—take them out of their own homes, cut them off from their parents and give them a new, real home and new parents. Take them away not for a year or two, at an Approved School, but for good. The ideal thing in many cases is a foster home, but the small hostel is sometimes almost as good and often is much better.

I have in no way exaggerated the problem of inadequate or unsuitable homes and as I have said I could have given many more instances. But if I have implied that *all* the parents of Barns boys are fools or rogues or both, then I have overstated my case. True there are very few where the parental relationship is ideal, but in many cases that is due to no fault of the parents and in others it is due to the unhappy fact of love having flown out of the window.

Even where the parents are "to blame," how are we to blame them? It is easier to blame the parents than the children, because one expects adult behaviour from adults (goodness knows why!—one rarely sees it!) and because one realises that the child's background has made it almost impossible for him to be other than he is. Ian Burns's mother, though a pleasant enough woman, seemed to have no affection whatever for her children, and no control over them, and they seemed to have had no kind of moral training. They frequently had scabies and—her husband being abroad—she would leave them alone in the house while she went off to the "pictures" or to dances. On one occasion there was a fire in the house while she was out enjoying herself. Her mother-in-law (who had been strongly opposed to the marriage) had no good word to say for her, and more than once threatened to call in the N.S.P.C.C. With such a background, what do you *expect* the children to be like?

But what of *Mrs. Burns's* background. When we learn that her parents abandoned her at an early age; that she was brought up in a particularly soul-less orphanage under strict discipline and never in her life knew what it was to be loved, we shall find it difficult

to condemn her if she seems unable to love her children. When we learn that the people among whom she was brought up believed that the only kind of "success" open to a girl was to secure a husband for herself as soon as possible and thus escape the disciplined drudgery by which they earned their living—when we understand that, we are not surprised that she leapt at the first chance of a husband when she was barely 17. I seem to be writing of the Victorian age—but Mrs. Burns was only in her twenties when her first-born came to Barns. She is one of the products of orphanage upbringing (about which I am glad to see there are at last some stirrings of the public conscience, if we may judge by the recent spate of letters in *The Times*) and a solemn warning to people who—like myself—are concerned with the bringing up of children in institutions.

But Hugh McGregor's mother was not the product of an orphanage. She enjoyed the privilege of being brought up in her own home, with her own father and mother. Her father was a drunken savage, her mother "no better than she should be," and the "home" was the scene of constant and violent quarelling between them, in which sometimes the neighbours had to separate the contestants. To escape from that home was her only aim—and she finds that in her hurry to escape it she has merely reproduced it. For how many generations, one wonders, does this story go back? And for how many generations will it continue? *That* we can do something about. I have suggested how.

These two instances (of many) give the background only of mothers. That is just the accident of war and domestic circumstances which make mothers more available to our enquiries than fathers. In the few cases where we have caught a glimpse of the father's antecedents, much the same sort of thing has been seen.

However angry these parents may make us (and I have not concealed the fact that they make me very angry indeed) it is futile to blame or to condemn them. They need the same kind of sympathetic understanding and help as we try to give their children at Barns. We at Barns, cannot do much about that, but I believe that every such place as Barns should maintain the full-time services of a fully-trained Psychiatric Social Worker for this very purpose—among others. She will not be able to cure the parents of all their troubles—but she will be able to help a good deal, and perhaps act as a buffer between the generations. The parents will be suspicious and will shut up like a clam before anyone who uses even a faintly moral approach. But to anyone who begins to show the slightest understanding of their difficulties and their distress, they will pour out their troubles in a never-ending stream. I myself am

the least approachable of men and, as a young man, was much less so. Yet as a "mental health" student I had middle-aged parents pouring out their troubles upon me to the point of embarassment. When that happens a trained and sympathetic worker can very often do a great deal to re-adjust the tangled emotional situations and even sometimes to mend the breaches. Where this proves to be impossible she (it usually seems to be "she." I know of no reason why it should not be "he".) can often facilitate the separation which has hitherto been dreamed of but never accomplished, and which alone can bring peace.

Reggie Mitchell's family illustrates several points that I have tried here to make, and leads naturally on to my next. We never knew his mother, who had deposited him, in his perambulator, on *her* mother's doorstep (subsequently reclaiming and pawning the pram !). I believe she was not at that time married to Reggie's father and whether she has married him since I am not quite clear, but they have lived more or less together ever since, except when they have been in gaol—which has been pretty often. What is the background that has produced this wayward mother? It was, in the first place, a "mixed" marriage, and religion was brought into all the lurid quarrels which provided almost all the emotional warmth the children ever knew. Grannie Mitchell has been married for over 40 years to a man who drinks to excess, is surly and quarrelsome when sober and violent when drunk; and who at all times is more than a little touched with something very much like religious mania. We know only her side of the story—we do not know what provocations he may have suffered. But for most of her married life she was in misery or in terror. She stayed with her husband at first because of the children, and later because she did not dare and did not know how, to set about getting a separation. We may pause for a moment to wonder what kind of unhappy childhood produced that result in the Grandfather, before passing to look at the result in the Grandson. Grannie tried at first to look after the baby that was abandoned to her but her husband was so violent about what he called "That Protestant bastard" that she had him sent to an orphanage. The Orphanage was a religious foundation and when Grannie took Reg. away at the age of 11, because of the ill-treatment he received there, he was a sour, unhappy bad-tempered and resentful hater of God and man. Grannie found life impossible with such a husband and such a grandson, and the boy came to Barns. I think we were able to help him, though naturally we could not in two years eradicate the result of nine years cruel mishandling.

When the time came for Reggie to leave we were faced with the problem of where he was to live. We had by this time a part-time Social Worker in Hilda Ludlam (Mrs. Gilbert Ludlam) who was in touch with Grannie. She was shocked by the state of affairs she found in the "home" The old couple had not exchanged a word—except sometime in anger—for 10 years. Necessary domestic communication was carried on by means of notes left on the mantelpiece. The old lady was quite fond of Reggie and would have like to make a home for him, but that was impossible. The time for reconciliation was long since passed, but with Hilda Ludlam's help, arrangements were soon in hand for a judicial separation so that the old lady could at least spend her declining years in peace and provide a home for Reg. This story has not, alas, a happy ending. Just when arrangements were in train for the separation, the old man was taken seriously ill, and she naturally could not leave him then.

But we still had to find a home for Reginald—and here, perhaps, I may tell of the Barns Flat.

The Barns Flat is not an official part of our work inasmuch as it was not formally sponsored by the Committee; it is, as it were, a private enterprise on the part of our Chairman, though without the usual rewards of what is commonly conceived by that name. Reggie was not the only boy who had no home to which to return. A flat was therefore secured, just opposite the home of Hilda Ludlam. Certain rooms were sub-let to ordinary tenants, a housekeeper was installed, and the rest of the flat given over to the "Barns waifs." The flat has been the source of endless trouble and worry to all concerned with it; but it has been the means of salvation already to two Barns boys.

The Social Worker does an indispensable part of our work. She maintains liaison between Barns and the family; she provides the family history that is so essential if we are properly to understand a boy's history (though lately this has been coming to us through the referring agency—the new Child Guidance Clinic); she can often help in the family's domestic difficulties; she finds suitable jobs for the boys when they leave, and helps them to rehabilitate themselves in the ordinary life of society.

Fourteen is about as unsuitable an age as one could find for effecting a revolution in a person's habits and environment. At this age a boy has entered the stormy and unsettling period of adolescence, but has not yet had time to make any kind of adjustment there. Much of our work would be undone if the boys were not eased gently into their new world. That is the function of the Social Worker.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

LAST WORDS

"More devices I tell thee not at this time; for if thou have grace to feel the proof of these, I trow that thou shall know better how to teach me than I thee. For although it be thus as I have said, yet truly I think that I am full far therefrom."

ANON—"The Cloud of Unknowing."

I MUST make an effort at this point to repress even more than hitherto what little modesty I still retain in order to reply to a criticism that is sometimes made.

Three or four years ago I wrote a book called "The Hawkspur Experiment," in which I recounted something of the work upon which I had been engaged with Q Camps. This book was very kindly received (though alas, its *borrowers* seem to have far outnumbered its *buyers*!) and among several flattering things that were said was one that appeared several times and which, indeed, I had heard before the book was published. The gist of this criticism was as follows. This work about which Wills has been talking, they said, is excellent work. They had every possible sympathy with it, the methods were right and deserved a wider application. But where, they asked, are we to find another Wills?—the suggestion being, that so far as our work had been successful it was due to my own personal merits and, it was suggested, I was a somewhat exceptional person. It is not enough to dismiss this by saying "rubbish"; that might cause my kind critics to say, as others did of the anonymous author from whose writings I quoted above—"O Wills *sanctissima, magna est humilitas tua!*"* but it would be no real answer to the criticism, and I think I must try to answer in advance the similar criticism that might be made of this work. My feelings on reading such an opinion are a mixture of gratification at the flattery and irritation at the misconception. Quite apart from the back-hander at my colleagues—both staff and committee—it is really very wide of the mark. I am prepared to concede the possession, perhaps in outstanding degree, of one quality or qualification which may have contributed in large measure to the success of our work, but it is one that anyone may have—I will return to it later. If our work at Barns has had any success (and I

* *They* said "O Hilton," but they might just as well have said, "O Wills," because neither of us wrote "The Cloud."

am sure it has) it is in spite and not because of my personal qualities. I have most of the commonly recognised disqualifications for dealing with young people or, for that matter, with any people. I am reserved in manner and not easily approachable, and I find it very difficult to make contact with other people, especially with children; I find that in talking to them I am inclined to be either fatuously facetious or ponderously pompous—I can hardly ever talk to them casually and naturally. I am quick-tempered and my gorge rises far too easily for the preservation of that equanimity that is so essential. Above all (or should I say below all?) I have that worst possible of vices—I am addicted to sarcasm. I try my best to overcome this weakness and indeed, I believe I do make some progress. But it is so far ingrained in my nature that it sometimes finds expression without my knowledge. When I was doing Settlement work in the East End of London as a young man, I was once—more than once—pursued through several of the streets of Bow by a band of little boys shouting after me, "Sarcy! Sarcy!!" A most humiliating experience—but it did not cure me. I have my good points, too, of course—this is not a masochistic orgy. But if you add to this formidable list of failings all the virtues you can think of—have you then the picture of a man ideally suited for working with difficult children? You certainly have not. Fortunately several of my colleagues have supplied the qualities I lack, and there is no doubt in my mind that if they had been under the leadership of a man better qualified for working with children, their efforts would have met with even greater success. Provided—and the proviso is of fundamental importance—provided he had also that one virtue to which I have confessed. There is no reason why he shouldn't, but the fact remains that it is not a very common quality, and one of the objects of this book is to increase its incidence. What I confess to, then, is an invincible faith in the methods we have employed and, what is more important, in the spirit which informs those methods. It is a faith that cannot be dimmed by set-backs and apparent failures, because it is based on a firmer foundation than the merely empirical; and because I *know* that any failures are failures in me, and not in the method.

People often say to me, "I have tried to use your* methods but . . ." That is where we differ. I know no buts. This is a gift which, if you ask, it shall be given unto you, and I hope now that that misconception has been completely cleared.

It may be asked "What then *are* the qualifications to be looked

* I merely quote. They are not "my" methods, of course.

for in the Head of such a place as Barns ?" The personal qualifications are obvious, and some of them I have already, as it were, contra-indicated in speaking of myself. But as to the qualifications that may be gained by education and training, my first desideratum is a negative one. Let him not be a teacher. This will surprise some people—especially after the praise I have bestowed upon some of my own teaching colleagues. But it is not intended as a reflection upon the teaching profession. Indeed I am tempted to say that a bad teacher might make a good warden, but a good teacher—hardly ever. In spite of the greatly widened conception that teachers have, in these days, of their function (and I confess that I sometimes wonder whether there is not a tendency, perhaps, to encroach too far on the sphere of the parent) it remains true that a teacher tends —by training and by the habit of experience—to regard a child as primarily someone to be taught. It is right and natural and very proper that he should do so—just as it is right and proper for the parson to consider us all as so many souls to be saved, and the grocer to regard us as so many customers to be got. He will thus tend—however perfect a man he may be—to confound the good scholar with the good boy, just as the grocer has a predilection in favour of the good customer. However much he may talk of the wide aims of education, his first and most important job is to produce what we might perhaps describe as a " taught " child. The better he is as a teacher, the more keen he is on his job, the more he will subordinate other ends to that. That is what he is trained for and that, if he has a sense of vocation, is his aim in life. He is a specialist. Very good then—let him stick to his last.

I know that in saying this I am attacking a vested interest and a tradition. Most of the Heads of Approved Schools are teachers, and most people will regard this as a perfectly natural thing. " What ! " they will say, " the Head of a school, and not a teacher ? Absurd ! " My point, however, is that it ought never to be a " school " at all. It is all very well to have a teacher in charge of a boarding school (though some of the most famous of them are in the charge of men who are clerics first and pedagogues second), consisting of children with a good home background, who will return to their homes for four or five months out of the 12. That is a school with a kind of inferior, temporary substitute " home " attached, and it is perfectly proper that the Head should be a teacher. But Barns is just the opposite—it is a home with a school attached and that, in my view, is what an Approved School should be. Or, if you like, a number of homes with a school between them. The first function of the Head of such an institution is to

provide a home. We have seen (in chapter three) what are the constituents of a good home, and I know of nothing in the training of a teacher that qualifies him to provide these constituents. It is true indeed—alas—that there is at present no academic training that does, but I live in the hope that this evil state of affairs may soon be remedied, and we may have recognised training schools for people who intend to work among the wards of society. In the case, however, of the particular type of child with whom we are now concerned, while it is true that the surrogate father is concerned with every aspect of the boy's life, there are some that must concern him perhaps more than others—I mean those aspects of the boy's character which caused him to become a member of this artificial family. Your warden, too, must be a specialist, and in carrying out his specialist work he will find that he is touching all sides of the boy's life. In this work he may have to call in the help of the teaching staff—but he may equally have to call inthe aid of the domestic staff. He should, therefore, be a man of wide interests and experience, with a working knowledge of all that touches the life of the boys in his care, including education in its narrow sense. No academic training, of course, can give him that kind of grasp of the situation, though practical training might. But the one kind of training that is now available, and which (it seems to me) is an indispensable part of your warden's equipment, is what is called Mental Health Training. Your warden should be a trained Psychiatric Social Worker. I hope that when the war is over many more men will take this training than have done so in the past.

I have said that the warden might equally have to call in the aid of the domestic or the teaching staff—but I think there should be very little distinction between them. Certainly your head-teacher will have to specialise in teaching (though not to the exclusion of everything else), your house-matron on her housework and your cook on her cooking. But in my ideal institution there will be a number of young people seeking the kind of widely varied experience I have referred to—trainees—who will participate in a subordinate capacity, in all sides of the work of the house. Thus one of them might be helping in the scullery in the morning and teaching in the afternoon ; another might be helping the warden with his records in the afternoon and supervising some games in the evening . . . We have not been able to achieve that ideal at Barns, but we have achieved the kind of spirit which such an arrangement would ensure. Bill Bell asked one of our domestic helpers to render first-aid to some minor injury he had suffered. She, to tease him, said, "Oh, I couldn't do that. I'm just the scivvy round here. You'll

have to find someone more important." "No, you're not," said Billy, "You can do it." "Oh, yes I am," she went on, "I'm just the scivvy. What else am I, then? I'm just the scivvy." "No," said Billy, "We don't have scivvies at Barns. This is not an ordinary place. Barns is different!"

I have one final remark to make, and it is in the nature of an apology. I said on the title page (quoting from John Buchan's first novel, about an earlier inmate of Barns) that my course by the grace of God had had something of a method, which makes the telling the more easy. And so it does. But it also sets many snares for the feet of the unwary. In describing that method, there is a tendency to assume that it has always been applied; one tends to talk about the ideal as if it were the real, and to give counsels of perfection as if we ourselves had unfailingly kept them. I should hate to give that impression—or even to give the impression to our many friends that I was trying to give that impression. I am conscious of having said far too little of our many failures and "warpings past the aim." I have described the will and left my reader to assume a deed that—too often—was not done. "What I aspired to be and was not, comforts me," but I must ask my reader to believe that it has not made me so comfortable that I really imagine our work to have been so near to our aspirations as this account of it may perhaps suggest.

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(The names are of course all fictitious)

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